

OUTPATIENT GP REFERRAL GUIDELINES Speech Pathology

Southern Adelaide Local Health Network (SALHN)

Paediatric Feeding Disorders

- Failure to suckle / latch for breast or bottle feeding
- Increased respiratory distress during feeding
- Faltering growth / failure to thrive
- Inability to meet nutritional requirements orally
- Tube dependency
- Coughing or choking with food or drink
- Refusal to feed / oral aversion
- Stressful mealtimes
- Difficulty with developing chewing skills or transitioning to solids
- Refusal of/or difficulty with entire categories of food or textures

Information Required

- Any significant pregnancy/ birth history
- Any relevant congenital or developmental conditions
- Presence of Red Flags
- **Duration of symptoms**
- Associated symptoms
- Current daily oral intake (solids and liquids)
- Method of oral intake (breast/bottle/spoon or self- feeding)

Investigations Required

- Any known food allergies or intolerances
- Previous assessment of feeding by other professionals (ENT, Gastroenterologist, Paediatrician, Respiratory Physician, other speech pathologists or allied health professional)
- Previous investigations (modified barium swallow or video fluoroscopy, endoscopy, chest x-rays)
- Current height/weight percentile and any recent decline in percentile

Fax Referrals to

Department of Speech Pathology & Audiology, Flinders Medical Centre Fax: 8204 8941

Red Flags

Choking, gagging, coughing episodes during feeding

Repeated chest infections/respiratory illnesses

Faltering growth/declining weight/failure to thrive Unusual change of voice ('breathy' or 'wet' sounding) Sudden onset of feeding difficulties

Weak cough or inability to cough

Lengthy feed times (longer than 30-40mins per bottle) Not managing own secretions

Multiple swallows to clear fluid

Pain/discomfort during swallowing

Nasal regurgitation or frequent sneezing during feed

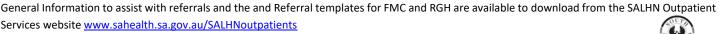
Suggested GP Management

- Reinforce safe feeding practices eg. Limit hard foods that are more likely to result in occlusion
- Reinforce positive feeding techniques ie. No forcing, pacing feeds
- Present at ED if signs of dehydration, increased parental distress with feeding, sudden onset of signs of dysphagia
- Referral to FMC Speech Pathology Department for assessment

Services website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients

Clinical Resources

- http://www.asha.org/public/speech/swallowing/feed ing-and-swallowing-disorders-in-children/
- http://raisingchildren.net.au
- http://www.nature.com/gimo/contents/pt1/full/gim o17.html





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1.0	Sept 2014	July 2022	Original
2.0	July 2022	July 2024	Amended PFD descriptor