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
- 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

Clinical Resources

- [http://raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au)
- [http://www.nature.com/gimo/contents/pt1/full/gimo17.html](http://www.nature.com/gimo/contents/pt1/full/gimo17.html)

General Information to assist with referrals and the and Referral templates for FMC and RGH are available to download from the SALHN Outpatient Services website [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients)