

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Pediatric Feeding Issues

Franciscan Health Pediatric Rehabilitation has expanded our speech therapy services to include assessment and treatment of pediatric feeding issues.

We are a transdisciplinary team, incorporating a variety of approaches to intervention, including clinical assessment of swallow function, oral motor skill building and sensory integration therapy. These services are provided as support for our family-centered approach towards holistic treatment of the child.

A wide variety of studies suggest that 20 percent of children will struggle with some type of feeding and/or growth issues during the first 5 years of life. Between 3 to 5 percent of these children require direct intervention to develop the skills needed for the lifelong process of eating (SOS Conference, Toomey and Associates, 2012).

WHEN TO REFER FOR CLINICAL SWALLOW ASSESSMENT (modified barium swallow study):

- Ongoing choking, gagging or coughing during meals
- History of eating and breathing coordination problems, and/or ongoing respiratory issues
- History of oral-facial surgeries or syndromes
- An infant who cries and/or arches at meals

WHEN TO REFER FOR ORAL MOTOR FEEDING EVALUATION:

- Ongoing poor weight gain or weight loss (weight percentiles falling)
- Parents report child as being “picky” at two or more well child checks
- Inability to transition to purees, solids or from breast/bottle at appropriate developmental age
- Food range of less than 20 foods, especially if foods are being dropped over time
- History of reflux with subsequent aversion to certain foods/textures



How to schedule an evaluation

If you feel you know a child with a feeding issue, we look forward to working with you on the care of this special patient. Please provide a signed order for either of the above mentioned assessments with the diagnosis code: 783.3 (feeding disturbance). This code will ensure the child is scheduled for the appropriate evaluation procedure. Orders can be faxed to (317) 528-5825.

Please ask to speak with a feeding specialist at (317) 528-5814 with any questions or concerns.