

SLP-chosen for you, from the Nicespeechlady.com library SPEECH PATHOLOGY PATIENT: _____

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST: _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____

_____ DATE: _____



HANDOUT-ABLE: Dysphagia Holiday Survival – for the Patient on Modified Consistencies

- Maintaining modified liquids or food status due to a swallowing impairment can be a monumental task every day, but during holidays -- this can be an especially challenging time. It isn't always possible to avoid all thin liquid and regular diet consistency food references or temptations in family activities, but as much as possible, these references should be avoided.

Detailed below are some suggestions that individuals receiving modified oral consistencies families/loved ones could choose to utilize in order -- to allow the best chance to tolerate the indicated swallowing recommendations during the holidays. Two key considerations in implementing these tasks would be to:

- Avoid as much as possible all food references in interactions
- Plan ahead in how to navigate the ultimate event of meals in the holidays

The ultimate goal is to enjoy holidays without food being the context of the pleasurable celebration.

- **Plan ahead to have modified foods available at the holiday meal for the patient and family members.** Careful consideration can be utilized in order to allow for pleasure of holiday foods in the indicated modified state. Some families may choose, to honor the needs of the patient, to only have the indicated consistencies available to all family members and loved ones. This is a radical --but a meaningful, loving act for the patient. At this time of recovering or compensating for long-term deficits, it is difficult for the patient to maintain these recommendations. If foods or liquids outside of the swallowing recommendation for the patient are not available to any family members – this will communicate to the patient that it is important to enjoy the holidays and at the same time avoid situations where there can be disappointing situations at the holiday meal for the patient.
- **Favorite things about people** — Outside of the meal — ask everyone in the family to say something they appreciate about each person in the sitting area.
- **Favorite things about the year** — Outside of the meal, ask everyone in the room to share their favorite event of the year.
- **Structured leisure tasks**— play board games, card games, dominoes.
- **Finding and watching movies without food references**
- **Find and listen to holiday songs without food references**

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- **ZOOM** —This is a word game that doesn't require any materials.
 - ✓ The first person poses a question that is multiple choice
 - ✓ Around the circle, each person answers the question. If they are not able to answer only one question (can't decide between two choices, or the true answer to the question is not a choice) — the answerer states "Zoom."
- **Holiday crafts without food materials/references** —
 - ✓ Making ornaments without any food items.
 - ✓ Learning new crafting projects, such as knitting, sewing, crocheting, needlepoint, etc.
- **Family members pre-choose stories from the past that do not have food references and share them** — a family member in advance can brainstorm past family or friend-reference stories that will take the patient down memory lane, taking care to only choose stories without a food focus.
- **Watching annual parades on TV, taking care to be on the watch-out for any food references to change the channel**
 - ✓ Macy's Day Parade
 - ✓ Fireworks on the 4th of July
- **Decorating for the holidays** —
 - ✓ Christmas decorations
 - ✓ Making a leaf centerpiece for Thanksgiving or Christmas event
- **Sporting events which occur on holidays** —Take care to mute/change the channel when food commercials emerge
- **Assist with wrapping presents for other family members** (take care that these are non-food items)— find creative ways to individualize presents with ribbons, poems, notes, ornaments, etc.
- **Communicate that there are plans to "re-do" the holiday meal once the patient passes the video swallow study in the future, if indicated.** If the patient knows this is just a "dry-run" in the event of the patient being safely cleared after treatment allows improvements, this will allow patients to tolerate the holiday. Plan on repeating the holiday meal in February, for example, for when the patient is able to safely consume a higher-level of modified food or liquid than currently.

***If it is possible for the patient to communicate their desire, it is recommended that families ask the patient for their preference of how to navigate the trickiness of the holiday meal itself. Some patients may opt out of the meal entirely (participate in an activity in a different room, or participate in an activity in the same room but not at the table). Another option is to consume the indicated consistencies with other family members consuming the traditional consistencies.