

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

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST: _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____

_____ DATE: _____



HANDOUT-ABLE: NPO Holiday Survival Guide

Maintaining NPO/nothing by mouth 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 food references or temptations in family activities, but as much as possible, these references should be avoided.

Detailed below are some suggestions that individuals with NPO status and their families/loved ones could choose to utilize, in order to allow the best chance to tolerate NPO status during the holidays. Two key considerations: 1. Avoid as much as possible all food references in interactions, and 2. 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 activity/celebration.

- **Favorite things about people** — Outside of the meal — ask everyone to share.
- **Favorite things about the year** — Outside of the meal, ask everyone in the room to share.
- **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.**
- **ZOOM** — This is a word game that doesn't require any materials. Directions: The first person poses a question that is multiple choice. Each person answers the question. If unable to answer with only one choice, then the answer is "Zoom."
- **Holiday crafts without food materials/references** — such as: making ornaments without any food items, or 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** — such as the Macy's Day Parade, or fireworks on the 4th of July
- **Decorating for the holidays** — such as Christmas decorations/making center-pieces
- **Sporting events which occur on holidays** — 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 improves on video swallow study results 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 at a later time -- when the patient is able to safely consume oral intake.