

# Medicine and swallowing problems

Choking is a major cause of preventable death of people with disability.



## What can increase the risk?

Certain medications can increase the risk of choking by causing swallowing problems (dysphagia) and, to a lesser extent, by causing drowsiness (sedation).

Some antipsychotic medicines can cause swallowing problems, while benzodiazepines and antiepileptic medicines can cause drowsiness.



## How can risks be reduced?

Knowledge and training can help workers identify dysphagia and prevent serious health complications. Training will also help you identify early signs, and symptoms, associated with choking and swallowing so you can assist in an emergency.



## Other steps to take

Other steps providers can take to support participants could include: arranging access to health professionals such as a GP and speech pathologist, organising mealtime management plans, assistance during mealtimes and regular medication reviews.

Taking these steps can reduce risks for participants and improve their quality of life



Mealtime management plans



GP & speech pathology assessment



Regular medication reviews



## Find out more

For full details on this practice alert and the obligations for NDIS support workers, and access to other training and resources, please visit [ndiscommission.gov.au/workerresources](https://www.ndis.com.au/workerresources)



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