

## THE CENTER FOR DIGESTIVE DISEASES AND SWALLOWING DISORDERS AT NEW YORK HOSPITAL QUEENS

The Center for Digestive Diseases and Swallowing Disorders, one of a few of its kind in New York, is dedicated to the management of patients with digestive diseases and swallowing disorders, providing comprehensive diagnostic and therapeutic intervention across the age continuum, from pediatrics to geriatrics.

Swallowing problems arise from a wide range of causes including:

- Neurological causes such as stroke, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (a.k.a. Lou Gehrig's disease), Parkinson's disease and cerebral palsy
- Traumatic causes such as head injury
- Infectious and inflammatory causes such as acid reflux, viral conditions
- Structural abnormalities such as diverticula, esophageal stricture, tumor
- Medication-induced abnormalities related to antipsychotics, muscle relaxants, anticholinergics
- Pediatric feeding and swallowing problems due to congenital abnormalities and prematurity

Signs and symptoms of swallowing problems are numerous. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Difficulty controlling saliva or food in the mouth
- Difficulty accepting food in the mouth
- Feeding refusal
- Difficulty chewing
- Coughing before, during or after swallowing
- Weight loss
- Frequent upper respiratory infections
- Pneumonia (resulting from overt and silent aspiration)
- A gurgly or wet voice after food or liquid intake
- Pain upon swallowing
- Regurgitation of food or liquid after meals

Left undiagnosed and untreated, unidentified swallowing problems can lead to chronic and/or significant pulmonary and nutritional complications.

## *Serving Queens and the Metro New York Area*

The Center for Digestive Diseases and Swallowing Disorders fills a great need in the borough of Queens, as well as the New York metropolitan area, by providing comprehensive management of patients with swallowing disorders, as well as expert endoscopic services and colorectal cancer screenings. An interdisciplinary approach to the care of patients with digestive and swallowing disorders firmly establishes the Center as a regional center of choice for physicians, allied practitioners and their patients. NYHQ is committed to providing the expertise physicians and patients can trust, and the service that they deserve.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO  
DISCUSS A CASE, TREATMENT PROTOCOL  
OR RESEARCH, CALL

**718-670-2716**

THE CENTER FOR DIGESTIVE DISEASES  
AND SWALLOWING DISORDERS  
AT NEW YORK HOSPITAL QUEENS

On the courtyard level  
56-45 Main Street  
Flushing, New York 11355  
718-661-7493 (fax)

[www.nyhq.org](http://www.nyhq.org)



*Expertise you trust.  
Service you deserve.*

New  
York  
Hospital  
Queens

Member

**NewYork-Presbyterian Healthcare System**

Affiliate: Weill Medical College of Cornell University

© 2007 New York Hospital Queens

## *A Guide to Services*

The Center For Digestive Diseases  
And Swallowing Disorders  
at New York Hospital Queens

New  
York  
Hospital  
Queens

Member

**NewYork-Presbyterian Healthcare System**

Affiliate: Weill Medical College of Cornell University

The Center specializes in coordinated patient care, education and research that can only be accomplished through interdisciplinary team involvement. Our team consists of specialists from all areas of medicine including gastroenterology (adult and pediatric), speech-language pathology, radiology, nutrition, otolaryngology, thoracic surgery, pulmonology and neurology.



## Interdisciplinary Team

Many evidenced-based therapeutic and medical modalities are effective in remediating the various stages of swallowing. The interdisciplinary team at The Center for Digestive Diseases and Swallowing Disorders works together daily to determine the most effective treatment methods and to provide comprehensive care to patients. The Center's goal is to bring each patient to his/her highest level of function.

## Speech-Language Pathology and Swallowing Services

With specialized training in the assessment and treatment of patients with swallowing disorders, the speech-language pathologist evaluates clinically and with state-of-the-art radiological and endoscopic instrumentation to accurately diagnose oral, pharyngeal and esophageal abnormalities. These diagnostic techniques often identify silent causes of pulmonary complications such as silent aspiration. Once diagnosed, successful strategies for treatment are identified and the speech-language pathologist will provide outpatient

treatment to carry-over independent use of these techniques. If nutrition and hydration cannot be safely maintained by oral feeding, the interdisciplinary team will determine the need for alternative feeding methods.

## Nutritional Services

The potential for undesired weight loss is common for swallowing-impaired patients. Our nutritionists construct a detailed assessment of each patient's needs and determine an appropriate nutritional plan of care, guiding the patient and family to make diet modifications while also providing expertise in the appropriate supplementations, such as nutrient dense products or tube feedings. The nutritionists also offer guidance regarding the best way to maximize patients' nutrition and hydration.

Medical nutrition services are also available to help manage a number of gastrointestinal disorders, including:

- Morbid obesity
- Celiac disease (sprue)
- Chronic liver disease

The nutritionist works closely with the gastroenterologist and other specialists to monitor and manage weight issues.

## Advanced Diagnostic and Treatment Services

The Center's new, \$5 million, state-of-the-art facility combines the latest in innovative technology and comprehensive services. The physical centerpiece is the new endoscopy unit.

Comprised of six procedure rooms and 15 recovery room spaces, this unit features state-of-the-art Olympus endoscopic equipment, dual flat screen high-definition monitors and our new Endosoft report writing system that permits digital imaging and archiving of data.

Patients are able to maintain digestive health through routine examinations, such as upper endoscopy and colonoscopy. Pre-cancerous polyps (adenomas) and colon carcinomas are identified and treated by the 50 consulting and full-time physicians who make up the adult Division of Gastroenterology at NYHQ. With diagnostic procedures such as manometry to assess motility and pH testing to assess gastroesophageal reflux, referring physicians are provided with the most comprehensive assessment for their patient.

Speech-language pathologists utilize instrumentation such as fiberoptic endoscopic swallowing equipment (FEES) and video-fluoroscopy (modified barium swallow exams) to assess the status of the swallow and to determine the most appropriate treatment plan. The speech-language pathologist and radiologist work jointly to identify any structural and functional abnormalities during the radiological examination.



## State-of-the-Art Endoscopic Technology

New endoscopic technology allows for high-resolution imaging, magnification endoscopy and special imaging technologies that are important in the early diagnosis and management of malignant and pre-malignant conditions of the digestive tract. The Center's pediatric swallowing service provides pediatric endoscopic services. The speech-language pathologist uses fiberoptic endoscopy to assess and treat the swallowing of patients who require assessment of the pharynx and larynx, including patients with a history of vocal cord paralysis, tracheostomy and ventilator dependence.

Endoscopic ultrasonography is a specialized technology, allowing for minimally-invasive imaging and tissue sampling throughout the gastrointestinal tract, as well as radiographic imaging of therapeutic endoscopic examinations in patients with hepatobiliary disorders (ERCP). A portable anesthesia machine and availability of anesthesia gases in each room allow physicians to administer general anesthesia when necessary, eliminating the need to utilize an operating room in all but the most critical cases.

Capsule endoscopy ("pill camera") exams are a routinely performed, non-invasive modality, which can provide meaningful information in patients with obscure GI bleeding and inflammatory bowel disease. Patients with liver diseases are also cared for in the endoscopy unit. This assures a safe, monitored setting for the performance of percutaneous liver biopsies and therapeutic paracenteses. Patients with inflammatory bowel disease, ulcerative colitis and Crohn's Disease can have endoscopic and capsule exams done right here. Additionally, patients can receive infusions of life-altering medication (Infliximab).

These comprehensive services allow the referring physician to have a central location for the interdisciplinary team to collaborate and execute the best treatment plan.

## Teaching

At NYHQ there is a fellowship program for adult gastroenterologists in training. Three fellows complete three years of training under the tutelage of the division staff.

Several weekly conferences on a variety of topics are open to the medical center community, featuring presentations from specialties of surgery, radiology, pathology and speech-language pathology.

Physicians at the Digestive Disease Center are also on the faculty of Weill Medical College

of Cornell University. Additionally, graduate student speech-language pathologists train with the master clinicians at NYHQ. The Director of Speech-Language Pathology is one of the first charter members for board specialty recognition in swallowing disorders in the United States.

## Research

Research activities focus on clinical trials in a variety of areas, including novel regimens for treating radiation injury to the rectum, investigation into antibiotic regimens for *H. pylori* infection (the major cause of peptic ulcers and gastric cancer), novel uses for capsule endoscopy, and swallowing treatment efficacy for patients with diagnoses of Parkinson's disease and dementia, to name a few.



## Pediatric SWALLOWING SERVICES

Children with feeding and swallowing problems are often the most complex patients to treat.

The most common causes of feeding difficulties in children include:

- Gastrointestinal disorders such as gastroesophageal reflux, slow stomach emptying and constipation
- Respiratory problems
- Cardiac issues
- Sensory and motor integration problems such as feeding refusal

Feeding difficulties are often seen in children with developmental disabilities such as cerebral palsy and congenital disorders, as well as those on the autism spectrum.

Our Center's team works closely with referring physicians to find the cause and the right treatment protocol.

Our specialists include:

- Pediatric gastroenterologist
- Pediatric speech-language pathologist
- Pediatric anesthesiologist
- Medical nutritionist and dietician

This team will accurately evaluate, provide outpatient and inpatient intervention and coordinate care with the patient's existing early intervention team.