Modified Diets

Signs For Downgrade

s/sx dysphagia with current diet

- Coughing/throat clearing
- Wet or gurgly vocal quality
- Difficulties chewing
- Prolonged mealtimes
- Pain in the mouth, tongue, jaw when chewing
- Oral residue without awarenes
- Unable to clear residue with strategies
- Increased effort breathing when eating/drinking
- Delayed/slow swallow initiation
- Multiple swallows per bolus
- Prolonged mastication
- Oral residue or pocketing of food/liquids
- Poor oral control
- Fatigue during meals

Medical changes

- Acute illness: pneumonia, delirium, respiratory compromise, etc.
- Decreased alertness or sedation
- Worsening neurological symptoms
- Impaired safety awareness despite cues/supervision with meals

Instrumental results

- Penetration +/- aspiration with current diet
- Significant residue
- Poor airway protection
- Inefficient/unsafe swallow strategies despite cues
- Esophageal issues: dysmotility, narrowing, diverticulum, etc.

Signs For Upgrade

Increased strength & coordination

- Improved mastication
- No bolus holding/pocketing
- Patient wants advanced textures, is aware of the risks
- Normal bolus containment/control
- Reduced need for cues
- No overt signs of aspiration or dysphagia with advanced textures
- Improved swallow initiation timing

Improved medical status

- Improved alertness
- Improved respiratory rate/breath control during meals
- No acute infection or delirium
- Resolved acute weakness or fatigue
- Improved cognition/safety awareness

Improved instrumental results

- Minimal to no penetration/aspiration
- Manageable residue
- Successful use of strategies: chin tuck, effortful swallow, supraglottic swallow, pacing, etc.
- Improved esophageal function s/p medical intervention