

Aspiration pneumonia is an inflammation of the lungs and bronchial tubes caused by inhaling foreign material (usually food, drink, vomit, or secretions from the mouth) into the lungs. This may progress to form a collection of pus in the lungs (lung abscess) and can be life-threatening. Aspiration of small amounts of food may not cause immediate symptoms, but a fever later may suggest development of aspiration pneumonia.

Possible symptoms of aspiration when feeding include:

- Coughing or choking when eating
- Gasping for breath
- Feeling like food is lodged in the throat
- Wheezing, congestion and shortness of breath
- Rapid pulse (heart rate)
- Bluish color around lips and fingernail beds caused by lack of oxygen
- Agitation
- Fever
- Cough:
 - o With foul-smelling sputum
 - o With sputum containing pus or blood
 - o With greenish sputum
- Chest pain
- Unexplained recurrent lung infections (pneumonia)
- Low blood pressure

Possible complications of aspiration include:

- " Pneumonia or lung abscesses,
- " Spread of infection to the blood stream (bacteremia)
- " Spread of infection to other areas of the body
- Shock
- Acute respiratory distress syndrome
- Death

If acute respiratory failure develops, the patient may have a prolonged illness or die.

I, _____, as acting durable power of attorney have been informed of the results of the modified barium swallow that indicated aspiration on all consistency food/fluids and of the physician's recommendation for the resident to receive nothing by mouth due to the high risk for aspiration. I understand the *signs* and symptoms of aspiration and the potential consequences of feeding the resident orally. Despite the risk of complications or death, I give permission to _____, to permit the staff to orally feed _____, a resident of _____.

Signature

Date

Witness

Date

Witness

Date