



Swallowing exercise – Shaker laryngeal lift

This leaflet is for patients experiencing swallowing difficulties and explains a technique to strengthen your throat to help with swallowing

What is the Shaker exercise?

This exercise is designed to strengthen the muscles in your throat, to help your swallowing.

How to do Shaker exercise

1. Lie flat on your back with your shoulder blades and buttocks in contact with the bed/floor*. Do not use a pillow under your head.
2. Lift your head only to look at your feet, imagine trying to hold a tennis ball under your chin. Perform a series of three 60-second head lifts, each followed by 60 seconds of rest.
3. Next perform 30 head lifts with no rest between if possible.
4. Repeat this 3 times a day, every day for 6 weeks.

Please note: Do not do this exercise if you have a sore or stiff neck or heart problems. If in any doubt, ask your healthcare professional.

* If this is too uncomfortable try sitting in an upright position. Roll up a small towel, hold it under your chin and squeeze down. Repeat as above.

You may find it helpful to use the charts on the next page to record your exercises and document your progress.

Contact us

Speech & Language Therapy

Inpatient Therapies Level 1 Battle Block

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Progress chart

Week 1	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Week 2	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Week 3	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Week 4	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Progress chart (continued)

Week 5	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Week 6	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts	3x 60 sec lifts	30x lifts
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

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Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Speech & Language Therapy, March 2026
 Next review due: March 2028