



World Health
Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR
Europe



SELF-REHABILITATION AFTER SEVERE COVID-19

Managing eating, drinking and swallowing

If you were ventilated with a breathing tube while you were in hospital, you may notice that you have some difficulty with swallowing food and drink. These techniques may help.

- **Sit upright** whenever you eat or drink. Never eat or drink while lying down.
- **Remain upright** (seated, standing, walking) for at least 30 minutes after meals.
- **Try foods of different consistencies (thick and thin)** to see if some foods are easier to swallow than others.
- **Concentrate** when you eat or drink.
- **Take your time when eating**
- **Make sure your mouth is clear** before taking another bite or sip.
- **Eat smaller meals** throughout the day if you get tired while eating full meals at one time.
- **Take a break to recover** if you cough or choke, or your breathing becomes difficult when you eat or drink.

Contact your health-care professional if eating and drinking continue to be difficult.