

# Exercises to Strengthen the Tongue and Throat (Pharynx)

These exercises help strengthen swallowing muscles.

1. **Yawning:** Helps upward movement of the larynx (voice box) and the opening of the esophagus.

Open jaw as far as you can and hold for 10 seconds. Rest for 10 seconds. Do 5 reps 2 times per day.

2. **Effortful swallow:** Improves movement of the tongue base and pharynx (throat).

As you swallow, imagine you have a golf ball stuck in your throat. Squeeze as hard as you can with your throat muscles. Do \_\_\_ reps \_\_\_ times per day.

3. **Mendelsohn:** Promotes movement of the epiglottis. Improves the function of the larynx and strength of the esophageal opening.

Swallow and hold halfway through swallow (at highest point) for 1 to 2 seconds. Finish swallowing. Do \_\_\_ reps \_\_\_ times per day.

4. **Tongue hold (Masako Maneuver):** Helps strengthen tongue muscles needed for swallowing.

Swallow while holding your tongue tip  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch outside of your teeth. If that's too hard, push tongue firmly against the roof of your mouth while swallowing. Do \_\_\_ reps \_\_\_ times per day.

5. **Epiglottic control:** Improves airway protection when you swallow.

Open your mouth wide. Exhale the air from your lungs, but do not allow any air to escape from your mouth. Your airway should remain closed. You will be exhaling against a closed throat so air cannot escape. Hold for \_\_\_ seconds. Do \_\_\_ reps \_\_\_ times per day.

6. **Shaker:** Improves the movement of the epiglottis and strengthens the opening of the esophagus. Also promotes upward movement of the larynx.

Lie on your back, keeping your shoulders flat on the ground. Raise your head far enough to be able to see your toes and hold for 1 minute and then rest. Do 3 reps 3 times per day.

7. **Resistive tongue exercise:** Improves tongue strength and control of food and drink.

Push tongue **hard** against roof of mouth.

Push tongue **hard** against each cheek.

Push tongue **hard** against a tongue depressor or spoon.

Hold for \_\_\_ seconds.

Do \_\_\_ reps \_\_\_ times per day.

