

**State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Services**

**ASPIRATION AND REFLUX PRECAUTIONS**

**Aspiration Precautions**

Aspiration precautions are interventions to reduce the risk of aspiration of food, liquids, and/or secretions during the swallowing process. These interventions may include:

- Positioning the person in an upright position to 90 degrees while eating or taking oral medications
- Positioning the person to maintain an upright position for one hour after eating
- Providing instruction and direction to staff to immediately report to nursing staff all changes to the person's baseline especially :
  - Increased coughing
  - Increased secretions or changes to secretions (color, texture)
  - Change in respiratory status
  - Fever

**Reflux Precautions**

Reflux Precautions are specific orders prescribed for an individual who has been identified to be at significant risk of aspiration due to gastroesophageal reflux.

These orders should include:

- Positioning the person in an upright position to 90 degrees while eating or taking oral medications
- Positioning the person to maintain an upright position for one hour after eating
- Avoidance of positioning the person in a flat position. Any procedure that may be required to be performed that would require the person to lie flat, would be for as brief a time as possible and when practical scheduled during periods of least risk such as on an empty stomach. At these times, the observation of the individual shall be increased.
- An incline block/wedge will be used in the person's bed to keep the head of the bed elevated if the person is not in a hospital bed.
- Individual should receive a reflux modified diet which reduces/ restricts the following items:
  - Acidic foods
  - Fatty foods
  - Caffeine

Staff shall receive training and direction to immediately report to nursing staff all changes to the person's baseline especially :

- Increased coughing
- Increased secretions or changes to secretions (color, texture)
- Change in respiratory status
- Fever