

HOSPITAL

SUBJECT: Aspiration Precautions
HOSPITAL
DEPARTMENT: Multidisciplinary

EFFECTIVE DATE:

EXPIRATION DATE:

REVISED:

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide a reference for staff in caring for inpatients that are at risk for aspiration and its complications of aspiration pneumonitis and aspiration pneumonia.

POLICY: All licensed and unlicensed personnel caring for inpatients must be informed if a patient is at risk for aspiration and its complications. Personnel will be instructed in and take appropriate precautions.

- DEFINITIONS:
1. **Aspiration:** misdirection of foreign materials (oropharyngeal bacteria, food, liquids, or regurgitated gastric contents) into the larynx and lower respiratory tract (1).
 2. **Aspiration pneumonitis:** acute chemical lung injury due to this aspiration (1).
 3. **Aspiration pneumonia:** when oropharyngeal or gastric contents that have been colonized with pathogenic bacteria are aspirated into the lower respiratory tract (1).

PROCEDURE: This policy will direct staff to the clinical guideline that is used to minimize the risk of aspiration and its sequelae in our patients. See Appendix 1 for these guidelines.

AUTHORIZATION:

_____	_____	_____
	Title	Date
_____	_____	_____
	Title	Date

References for policy and clinical guidelines:

(1): Strachan, P., Solomita, M. (Sept 2007). Aspiration syndromes: Pneumonia and pneumonitis -- Preventive measures are still the best strategy. *The Journal of Respiratory Diseases*, 28 (9), 370.

(2): Langmore, S., Terpenning, M., Schork, A., Chen, Y., Murray, J. et al. (1998). Predictors of aspiration pneumonia: How important is dysphagia? *Dysphagia*, 13, 69-81.

(3): Langmore SE, Skarupski KA, Park PS, Fries BE. (2002). Predictors of aspiration pneumonia in nursing home residents. *Dysphagia*, 17, 298-307.

(4): Methany, N.A., et al. (2006). Tracheobronchial aspiration of gastric contents in critically ill tube-fed patients: Frequency, outcomes, and risk factors. *Critical Care Medicine*, 34(4), 1007-1015.

(5): Susarla, S. & Saito, H. (June 2013). Characteristics & risk factors of aspiration pneumonia: Case-control study. *Noon Conference*. Lecture conducted from Steward Carney Hospital, Dorchester, MA.