LifeTec™ QUEENSLAND
towards easier living

Eating and Drinking Equipment

A variety of equipment is available to assist people who have difficulty eating and drinking due to hand weakness, pain, stiffness, tremor, in coordination, or who are only able to use one-hand.

POSITIONING
It is important to be seated in a comfortable and supportive chair, close to a table at the right height.

Features of a good chair include a sturdy chair which has adjustable seat height, contoured backrest and armrest. Sitting in a stable relaxed posture, within comfortable reach of food and drink items, enables better use of existing abilities.

Tables with a cut out section further increase the seated person's stability and decrease the requirement for extended reach.

CUTLERY, HANDLE ADAPTATIONS AND ORTHOSES
Standard cutlery can be made easier to use by enlarging the handle with foam tubing or clay. Cutlery is also available with ready made built-up handles.

Rocking T knife angled knives enable a stronger grip and allow a sawing action to be used to cut food.

Rocker knives enable people to cut food using one hand.

Some knives combine the rocking knife action with a fork for entirely one handed eating.

People with limited or no grasp can manipulate cutlery by using a palmar cuff orthosis. A strap can be placed around the handle of a fork/spoon to assist with grasping. Some straps have a pocket in the palmer section so the cutlery can be inserted and removed easily from hand or limb.
Spoons and forks with an angled shaft can assist those with limited arm movement to manipulate food into the mouth.

Standard cutlery can sometimes be bent for this purpose and the handle modified to suit their needs.

Weighted cutlery may reduce spillage of food for individuals with tremors.

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Institute for Healthy Communities Australia Certification Pty Ltd
AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000 QUALITY CERTIFIED ORGANISATION

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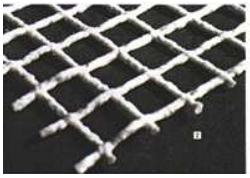
PLATES AND NON-SLIP BASES

A clip-on plate guard can be added to most plates to provide an edge to push against. This may help to prevent spills for people with in coordination, tremor or limited vision and may help to push food onto the spoon for people who can only use one hand.



A variety of no-slip materials are available or can be improved to prevent plates or cups slipping. This may be useful for people with tremor or in coordination, or for people with the use of one hand only.

Suction cups on the bottom of a plate or bowl may also be useful, and may hold items in place more firmly than many non-slip products.

CUPS, BEAKERS AND STRAWS

Two handed mugs may be useful for some people, to lift or stabilise a cup.

Weighted mugs may also be useful in reducing tremor. Lightweight cups can assist those with upper limb weakness and in coordination.

Insulated mugs are useful to prevent burns as well as to help keep liquids hot or cool.

An outward lip or flange at the base of a cup can assist to prevent spills. Another option is a separate base that the cup fits into.

Cups with a cut out section are useful for people unable to tilt their head backwards. They also prevent the rim of the cup pressing on the nose of a person with an uncontrolled bite reflex. Cut out cups also enable the carer to view the contents of the cup when giving someone a drink.

Straws eliminate the need to lift, hold and manipulate the cup in a coordinated way. Straws that feature a one-way valve reduce the effort required to draw fluids up through the straw and are useful for people with difficulty sucking and swallowing.

Beakers or cups which feature a lid with a spout are useful for preventing spills and egulating the flow of liquid into the mouth. Cups with large handles may assist those with weak grasp by allowing them to place their whole hand through the handle.

NEED TO KNOW MORE?

Telephone, fax or e-mail your enquiry to obtain further information from one of the therapists' about products. Alternatively, you can make an appointment to trial the equipment at our display centres or through our outreach service. Please phone LifeTec Queensland for further details.

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