

Red flags: Identifying children at risk of Eating & Drinking Difficulties

1. History

Birth history:

- Premature
- Birth trauma (eg. HIE)

Known diagnosis:

- CP or other neurodisability eg. Muscular dystrophy
- Condition eg. Hydrocephalus, cleft lip/palate, syndromes, congenital cardiac disease

Morbidity:

- Brain infection eg. Meningitis
- Malaria
- Frequent chest infection
- Mother has HIV
- Significant weight loss over recent weeks/months

2. Carer interview:

During every meal

- Eating/drinking take longer than they should of a child of this age (compare with weight gain)
- Child spills a lot of food/fluid from the mouth
- Child coughs / eyes water
- Child resists feeding eg. turns head, arches back, extends limbs, cries

If at least one item identified in sections 1 and 2 above, child should receive detailed feeding observation



Mealtime Observation

- <6 months: Feeding assessment by Joyce
- >6 months: Feeding assessment by Dorothy