

# Beyond the Oropharynx: Integrating Esophageal Knowledge into Pediatric Feeding Practice

Amanda Adsett, MSc, R.SLP, S-LP(C)

## Faculty

Amanda is a pediatric Speech-Language Pathologist with over 15 years of specialized experience in the assessment and management of complex swallowing disorders. For the past decade, Amanda has been a core member of a multidisciplinary Pediatric Aerodigestive Team, managing the needs of patients with co-occurring airway, digestive, and feeding disorders.

Currently practicing at a major children's hospital, Amanda's clinical background spans intensive care, inpatient acute care, and ambulatory settings, including roles as a Clinic Coordinator and clinician within Otolaryngology and Gastroenterology subspecialty teams. Amanda maintains a high-volume diagnostic practice with expertise in Videofluoroscopic Swallow Studies (VFSS) and Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES), and utilizes Pharyngeal High-Resolution Manometry (P-HRM) for challenging cases.

**Disclosures: Financial:** Amanda Adsett receives an honorarium from Education Resources, Inc.

**Non-Financial:** Amanda Adsett has no non-financial disclosures.

## About this Course

Learn how a deeper understanding of the esophagus strengthens clinical recognition, feeding management, and team collaboration. This workshop equips pediatric feeding therapists with foundational knowledge, screening skills, and practical strategies for children with known or suspected esophageal involvement.

Participants will examine the anatomy and physiology of the esophagus and its critical interplay with the oropharyngeal phase. The curriculum addresses the clinical presentation of structural, inflammatory, and motility-based pathologies and their specific impact on feeding function. Through complex case studies and video analysis, the course emphasizes scope of practice—empowering therapists to differentiate esophageal red flags, implement effective compensatory interventions, and facilitate timely medical referrals.

## Learning Objectives

- Determine the clinical limitations of a dichotomized view of swallowing by analyzing the interdependence of the oropharyngeal and esophageal phases
- Relate esophageal anatomy and physiology to the mechanics of bolus transport and sphincter function
- Correlate clinical signs, symptoms, and comorbidities that indicate potential esophageal contributions to a pediatric feeding disorder.
- Integrate esophageal screening considerations into clinical and instrumental swallow evaluations to guide diagnostic decision-making.
- Choose appropriate referral pathways and documentation language that adhere to scope of practice when esophageal pathology is suspected.
- Modify feeding therapy plans to support safe oral intake and facilitate participation in family mealtime routines for children with esophageal dysfunction
- Apply esophageal findings to the clinical decision-making process to coordinate care within a multidisciplinary team.

## Audience

This course is designed for feeding therapist OTs, OTAs, SLPs, SLPAs, lactation consultants and early intervention providers working with children.

## Schedule Day 1 - 9:40 am to 4:30 pm EST (US)

- 9:40-10:00 Live webinar registration
- 10:00-1:00 **Anatomy & Identification**
- Scope of Practice: Why esophageal knowledge is critical for the feeding therapist?
  - Anatomy & Physiology: Esophageal peristalsis, sphincters, and bolus flow
  - Recognizing red flags and common presenting concerns during feeding assessment
- 1:00-1:30 **Lunch**
- 1:30-4:30 **Pathology & Diagnostics**
- Common structural, inflammatory, and motility disorders (e.g., GERD, eosinophilic esophagitis, esophageal atresia/tracheoesophageal fistula, foreign bodies and caustic ingestion)
  - High risk populations, comorbidities, PFD, and the Aerodigestive patient
  - Diagnostic imaging and testing: VFSS esophageal screenings, contrast studies, and other diagnostic tools (e.g., manometry, pH probe, EGD)
  - **VIDEO** review: esophageal clearance, tertiary waves, stasis

## Schedule Day 2 - 9:40 am to 4:30 pm EST (US)

- 9:40-10:00 Live webinar registration
- 10:00-1:00 Differential Diagnosis & Referral
- Case studies: Differentiating oropharyngeal vs. esophageal dysphagia
  - Managing complex, multi-phase swallowing disorders
  - Differentiating physiological red flags from sensory-based aversion, behavioral feeding patterns, and presentations overlapping with ARFID across development (infant to teen). Documentation and referral writing, including sample language to maintain scope of practice
- 1:00-1:30 **Lunch**
- 1:30-4:30 **Therapeutic Intervention & Collaboration**
- Medical, pharmacological, and surgical interventions
  - Implementing evidence-informed and responsive feeding strategies (e.g. texture and bolus modification, positioning, compensatory maneuvers) and their potential impact on other phases of swallowing
  - Why feeding therapy fails and how to fix it
  - Collaboration in Action: Case analysis, video review, and the feeding therapist's role within Aerodigestive and multidisciplinary teams.

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## Credits

To receive a certificate of completion all registered attendees are required to attend and participate fully in all applicable course activities (i.e., labs, discussions, group work, polls, post-tests with passing grade of 80% or greater etc.) and complete the evaluation form.



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12 hours of this course qualify towards the discipline-specific hours for the 20-hour requirement for NDTA re-certification. They do NOT qualify towards the 8-hour NDTA Instructor requirement for re-certification. Education Resources, Inc. 266 Main St, Medfield, MA 02052. Please contact us with any special needs requests: [info@educationresourcesinc.com](mailto:info@educationresourcesinc.com) or 800-487-6530.

## Webinar Dates and Times

June 11 and 12, 2026

9:40 am EST • 8:40 am CST • 7:40 am MST • 6:40 am PST (US)

Registration is for both sessions. Zoom log-in instructions and course materials will be emailed/added to your ERI account 5-7 days prior to the first date of the webinar.



\$389 fee. **LIMITED ENROLLMENT.** Cancellation will be accepted until 14 days prior to the start date of the course, minus a \$75 Administration Fee. There will be NO REFUNDS after this 14-day deadline. Registration will be accepted after deadline on a space available basis. We encourage you to register online!

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-Amanda Adsett**

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