M.Sc. in Swallowing Disorders & Therapy

Dysphagia and swallowing problems are one of the common clinical problems met in clinical practice. The swallowing disorders have differing etiologies and involve many systems of the body. Neurological or structural damages in the upper aero digestive tract are the common causes of swallowing disorders. Majority of these problems can be localized and their causative factor can be identified by proper evaluation. The evaluation involves detailed clinical examination and use of imaging methods like videofluoroscopy and endoscopic evaluation of swallowing. The management of the swallowing disorders is mainly by training the patient special maneuvers as well as surgical intervention. The management of swallowing disorders needs a team led by a trained swallowing therapist assisted by clinicians from head and neck surgery, neurology and gastroenterology.

The master’s degree course in Swallowing Disorders & Therapy at Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences is the first of its kind in India. This specialized training programme focuses exclusively on swallowing disorder and is considered to be a post graduate clinical training programme where the training is by clinical interactive discussions, case discussions, journal clubs, student led symposia and theory lectures. This two-year postgraduate programme in swallowing therapy is similar to the existing programmes in Europe and USA. The department interacts with faculty from Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California and Roswell Park cancer center, USA.

A unique addition to this course is the interactive monthly telemedicine clinic held with the departments of Otolaryngology and Speech Language Pathology, Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California. The students have an opportunity to learn from the faculty of medical schools in USA while attending clinic at Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences.

University’s Mission:
- To provide well trained swallowing therapy specialists for augmenting supportive care in clinical practice

Goals and Objectives:
- To impart postgraduate training in swallowing and dysphagia management.
- To equip the trainees with ability to run a swallowing service in major hospital catering to medical, neurological and head and neck surgery problems
Academic Facilities:
- Central library with adequate journals and reference text books
- Weekly Seminars and Journal club

Clinical Facilities:
- Videofluoroscopy
- Endoscopy (FEES) equipment
- Swallowing therapy out patient room and evaluation tools
- Surgical OT facilities
- Pharyngeal manometry/manofluorography
- Ultrasonography
- Electromyography
- Esophageal manometry
- Laryngoscopy - (1) Flexible & (2) Rigid
- Bronchoscopy
- Esophagoduodenoscopy (EGD)

Special Clinics:
- Multi Disciplinary Tumor Board
- Surgical Planning Clinic
- Telemedicine Clinic
- Parkinson’s Disease Clinic

Course Evaluation:
- Six monthly internal assessment examinations (theory and practical examinations).
- Final assessment
  (Two-theory paper of 3 hours duration, practical and viva)

Career Opportunities:
Dysphagia management has become a specialty of its own in the developed nations. In India, it is still in its infancy. But, its significance in bringing out better treatment outcome is being realized by various specialists including, Head & Neck Oncologists, Stroke & Neuro Medicine specialists, Intensive Care physicians and Gastroenterologists. All major medical institutions in India and abroad are seeking out for trained dysphagia management specialists. Being the first training center in India, the trainees passing out are certain of immediate placement either in India or abroad.