

# Dysphagia in Graves' disease and hyperthyroidism: An emerging role for Speech and Language Therapists

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## Introduction and Background

**Grave's disease (GD)**, an autoimmune disorder, is one of the main causes of hyperthyroidism.

A **key feature** of GD is an **enlarged thyroid** or diffuse goitre.

**Dysphagia** may be a common experience for people with GD for 3 reasons; the thyroid gland location, its size increase and treatment options including thyroidectomy surgery.

## Methodology

**Aim:** Explore the role of the SLT in the assessment and management of GD in adults.

**Database Search:** Embase, PubMed, Web of Science, PsycINFO, Cinahl, from 2007 to 2017.

**Search terms:** MESH terms were supplemented with free-text words.

**Excluded:** Articles including participants with comorbid autoimmune disorders

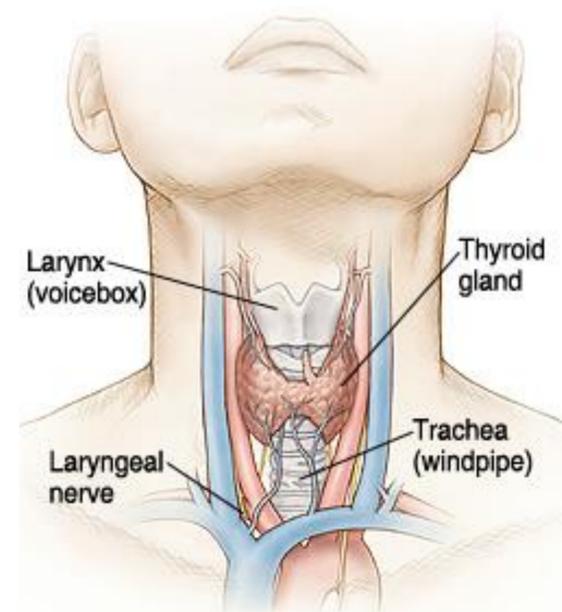
## Results

**15 studies** were identified using the search parameters outlined above.

Analysis of these studies suggests that in current clinical practice, the **SLT is absent** in the dysphagia assessment and management process.

However, a number of **emerging trends** were evident, including:

1. Patients with GD are **involved in the surgery options process**.
2. There is increasing interest in the **subjective experience of dysphagia symptoms**.
3. At present, **the potential role of the SLT** in supporting these patients both **pre and post-operatively** has been acknowledged and is developing.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

Dysphagia appears to be a **common symptom** in GD.

**Further research is needed** on the role of the SLT in the management of dysphagia symptoms in GD.

### Recommended Reading:

1. Banks, C. A., Ayers, C. M., Hornig, J.D., Lentsch, E. J., Day, T.A., Nguyen, S. A., Gillespie, .M. B. (2011). Thyroid disease and compressive symptoms. Laryngoscope. Jan 122(1): 13-6. doi: 10.1002/lary.22366.
2. Dhillon, V. K., Russell, J. O., Al Khadem, M. G., & Tufano, R. P. (2017). Preoperative information for thyroid surgery. Gland Surgery, 6(5), 482-487.
3. Sabaretnam, M., Mishra, A., Chand, G., Agarwal, G., Agarwal, A., Verma, A.K., and Mishra, K. (2012). Assessment of swallowing function impairment in patients with benign goitres and impact of thyroidectomy: a case control study. World J Surg 26:1293-1299.



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