

Pediatric *Feeding & Swallowing* Program

Feeding Clinic

LifeScape offers an interdisciplinary Feeding Clinic that features a continuum of care – outpatient, intensive day, and inpatient treatment – to meet every patient's needs. A multidisciplinary team will assess a variety of areas to develop the best comprehensive plan for addressing all feeding and swallowing needs: oral motor difficulties, swallow dysfunction, sensory difficulties, behavioral difficulties, and self-feeding.



Intensive Feeding Programs

LifeScape's intensive feeding programs offer therapy with higher frequency to improve outcomes. Therapy is highly individualized to meet the patient's and family's needs.

Outpatient Program:

- This program is recommended for patients who have feeding and swallowing difficulties that can be managed and treated with a frequency of 1-3x/week. Some patients may begin with weekly outpatient therapy and transition to the intensive day program.

Intensive Inpatient Program (2-3 weeks):

- This program is recommended for children with severe feeding difficulties (feeding tube dependence, malnutrition, total food refusal, etc.), who may have higher medical needs or a need for close monitoring. It is required that the patient be thoroughly evaluated by a physician to rule out medical problems related to the feeding difficulties. A recommendation for an inpatient stay would be for patients who are ready for tube weaning or have trialed outpatient therapy with little success. This program takes place at our Children's Specialty Hospital.

Intensive Day Program (2-8 weeks):

- This program is recommended for patients not needing around the clock medical attention; however, feeding difficulties are severe enough to warrant high frequency therapy. Speech and occupational therapy sessions will take place 3-4x/day, five days per week.

Our dietitian on staff will be available to monitor and consult on dietary components and assist with tube weaning. A primary caregiver must be present throughout the day and is required to attend some of the therapy sessions. This program takes place on the Fisher-Coon unit of our Specialty Hospital.



2501 W. 26th St., Sioux Falls, SD

Contact Us

- **Call** 605.444.9700 for scheduling or details
- **Toll-Free** 800.584.9294, Ext. 9700
- **Visit** LifeScapeSD.org/services/therapy

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Interdisciplinary Approach

Following the initial evaluation, the team will meet to discuss recommendations for one of our feeding/swallowing programs. Depending on the level of care, your interdisciplinary team will include a combination of the following: occupational therapist, speech therapist, clinical psychologist, physician, dietitian, and behavior therapist.



Melissa Carrier-Damon
MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

We evaluate all factors such as oral motor skills, swallowing, sensory, self-feeding, behavior, motivation and environment to establish a comprehensive treatment plan that recognizes the root of the problem, achieves results, and leads to happier, healthier families.

Melissa Carrier-Damon, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, is the first and only clinician in the state of South Dakota to be certified in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders. Our entire clinical team is committed to innovation, collaboration, and keeping patients and families at the center of care.

Goals of Our Program

Our team will work closely with the referring physician throughout the course of treatment.

- **Transitioning from tube to oral feeding**
- **Improving bottling skills**
- **Promoting consistent mealtime acceptance**
- **Decreasing behavioral challenges at mealtimes**
- **Increasing the volume and/or variety of foods a child will eat**
- **Improving oral sensory issues related to restricted eating patterns**
- **Improving oral motor skills for feeding and swallowing**
- **Improving oral and pharyngeal skills for safe eating and drinking**
- **Promoting developmental skills for feeding: self-feeding, cup use, and utensil use**
- **Training caregivers for generalization into the home environment**
- **Promoting weight gain**



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