Component 10: Epiglottic Movement

Epiglottic movement is judged at the time of *maximal* inversion of the epiglottis. It is at this point that the epiglottis should assume a fully downward/inverted position because of traction placed by the suprathyroid muscles on the hyolaryngeal complex and hence, the epiglottis. There is also current evidence to support the roles of the tongue base and pharyngeal muscles on epiglottic inversion. In the case of the sequential swallowing task, each swallow is considered in formulating the OI score.

**SCORING TIPS**

When scoring epiglottic movement, consider the following levels of inversion: (0) complete, (1) partial and (2) minimal to none. Epiglottic movement is relative to the resting position of the epiglottis prior to initiation of the pharyngeal swallow. As with most components, the use of “frame-by-frame” viewing is recommended.

**SCORING EXAMPLES**

The following images are intended to help you differentiate between Epiglottic Movement scores 0-2. The epiglottis is outlined in blue.

(0) Complete inversion:

The image above captures full retroversion of the epiglottis at the height of swallow.
(1) **Partial inversion:**

Partial inversion is defined as epiglottic movement up to but not past a horizontal plane.

In the image above, the epiglottis approaches a horizontal position but does not progress beyond the horizontal plane. A score of (1) would also be given if the epiglottis moves inferiorly but does not reach a horizontal position.

(2) **No inversion:**

No inversion is indicated by minimal to no movement of the epiglottis.