



How to Care for Your New Feeding Tube

Maintenance of a feeding tube can easily be done by the patient or a caregiver. This includes daily cleansing and flushing of your tube. You will be provided with post-procedure instructions; please follow these directions. Once your surgical bandage can be removed, you will need to clean around the feeding tube daily.

Cleaning Your Skin Around the Feeding Tube

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
- Use gauze or a cotton swab, mild soap, and water to gently clean around the tube site.
- Rinse around the tube set well with warm water and pat dry.
- Gently dry the skin with gauze or a clean soft towel.
- Do not use ointments or powders around the tube site unless directed by your provider.
- Observe your site routinely for pain, swelling, or unusual discharge, which could be signs of infection.
- Drainage that is yellow, green, and/or foul smelling is abnormal. Small amounts of pink-colored drainage and crusting are a normal process of wound healing.

Flushing Your Feeding Tube

Flushing your tube prevents your tube from becoming clogged and provides increased hydration. You should flush your feeding tube with lukewarm water a few times daily. Please follow the orders provided to you by your dietitian on the amount of water you should be administering daily.

Tips:

- Flush the tube with 60 mL (most syringe sizes) of warm water.
- You may use tap water for flushes.
- Avoid cold water, as this can cause discomfort and cramping.
- Flush your tube before and after feedings.
- Flush your tube before and after medication administration.

*We offer feeding tube education in our clinic.
To schedule a visit to discuss the care
and maintenance of your feeding tube,
please call (602) 406-2704.*

Medication Administration

All medications should be delivered in a liquid form or crushed and dissolved in water. You can obtain a pill crusher from your local pharmacy to assist with this.

Do not mix your medications with your formula.

Controlled-release and extended-release medications are not compatible with feeding tubes. Please verify your medications with your pharmacist or provider.

Feeding Methods

There are different types of feeding methods; your dietitian will select the most appropriate feeding for you. The most common method is bolus feeding, also known as syringe feedings. Formula is given over a short period time, usually 3-4 times a day.

Tips:

- Feedings are easier to digest when sitting upright.
- Remain sitting upright for 30 minutes following your feeding.
- It is best to weigh yourself regularly and monitor for any weight loss.

Nutrition and Formula Options

Your dietitian will choose a type of formula that is best in regards to your nutritional needs. There are different types of specialty formulas if others are not tolerated. Alternative methods of feedings include preparing and blending your own formula. Please discuss options with your dietitian.

Additional Resources

Vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, bloating, and/or stomach cramps may be signs of feeding tube intolerance.

If you experience any of these symptoms, please reach out to your dietitian to discuss formula options.

Clinical Dietitian
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