

Feeding Tube Frequently Asked Questions



Common Questions about Tube Feeding	Prevention/ Solution
<i>Can I eat anything by mouth if I am getting tube feeding?</i>	Discuss this with your health care practitioner. It will depend on the reason you are receiving nutrition via the feeding tube.
<i>If I am not hungry, can I skip my tube feeding?</i>	No, do not skip the tube feeding, unless you feel unusually full, bloated, or nauseated. If this occurs, follow the instructions given by your health care practitioner to resolve these problems.
<i>How do I know if I am getting enough tube feeding?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- You will feel full.- There will be an increase or your weight will be stable.- Weigh yourself at least once a week. If you lose two or more pounds, call your health care professional.

<p><i>Can medicines be given through the feeding tube?</i></p>	<p>Yes, be sure that all medications are crushed and are able to be crushed. Some medications cannot be crushed and either a liquid form or alternative medication must be ordered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain this information from your pharmacist. - Obtain medications in liquid form or powder form to decrease tube clogging. - Administer each medication separately. - Flush the feeding tube with water before administration, between medications, and after medication administration.
<p><i>How do I know if the feeding is going in too fast or too slow?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If feeding is given too fast you will have fullness, cramps, stomach pain and diarrhea. - If feeding is too slow, you will not get enough calories and you will begin to lose weight.
<p><i>What do I do if I do not get any stomach residual?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You may not have anything in your stomach. - Flush the tube with water to make sure that it is not plugged.

Common Questions about Feeding Tube Care.	Prevention / Solution
<i>How long can the tube stay in before it needs to be replaced?</i>	This varies for each person and for different types of feeding tubes. Please discuss with your health care practitioner.
<i>What do I do if my tube is moving in or out more than one (1) inch?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call your health care professional. - Keep the tube in place by taping it to your skin so it does not move.
<i>What do I do if I have skin irritation?</i>	<p><u>Determine Cause:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is your dressing wet from leaking around the tube? - Does the tape you are using cause irritation? <p><u>Solutions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wash the area with mild soap and water and dry your skin. Be sure to clean under any bumper or disk. - Follow instructions provided by your health care professional.
<i>What do I do if my pump will not work?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact the company where the pump was rented. - Speak with your health care professional to create a plan in case this should happen and delay your feeding.

Common Problems Associated with Tube Feeding	Prevention/ Solution
<i>What if I begin to choke, have trouble breathing, or cough up white mucous?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is possible that some of the tube feeding has gotten into your lungs by mistake. - If you are having trouble breathing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Sit up immediately * Stop the feeding * Call the doctor ** You may need to call 911 if you are having breathing difficulty.
<i>What do I do if I get too much stomach residual?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your health care professional will give you guidelines about how much residual is expected and what to do if your residual exceeds that amount. In some cases you will return the residual to your stomach and wait for a period of time before rechecking residual and starting your feeding.
<i>What do I do if my tube becomes clogged?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan ahead for this event with your health care professional. - It is very important to prevent this from happening. You can help by flushing with water as instructed. - If clogged, try flushing the feeding tube with warm (not hot) water. - If feeding tube remains clogged, contact your health care practitioner.
<i>What do I do if my feeding tube falls out?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan ahead for this event with your health care professional. - Cover the area with clean gauze and contact your health care practitioner immediately. - The tube needs to be replaced as soon as possible because the opening can close quickly (2-3 hours).

<p><i>What if I have pain, swelling, firmness, or redness around my tube?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your tube may be out of position. - Contact your health care practitioner.
<p><i>What do I do if I get diarrhea?</i></p>	<p><u>Determine the Cause:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the rate of the feeding too fast or too much at one time? - Are you taking medicine that can cause loose stools? <p><u>Solutions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a plan in place with your health care practitioner addressing this problem. - Contact the health care practitioner as necessary.
<p><i>What do I do if I feel thirsty?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be sure you are getting enough water along with the tube feeding. - Discuss with your health care practitioner what fluid intake amounts are right for you. - Keep a record of fluid intake and output
<p><i>What if I am constipated?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss ways to prevent constipation with your health care practitioner. This may include medication, extra fluids, and exercise or a change in formula.
<p><i>Is tube feeding effective in preventing aspiration pneumonia.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aspiration pneumonia is caused by the aspiration of food into the lungs. Studies have been published that show a high occurrence of aspiration pneumonia with patients who have tube feedings. This can be due to aspiration of saliva, which contains the bacteria found in the mouth. Good oral hygiene is required even when a person receives tube feeding. <p>http://huntingtondisease.tripod.com/feedingtubes/id4.html</p>

	<p>- Proper positioning (<i>sitting upright or at least 45 degrees during feeding and 60 minutes after</i>) and adhering to your health care practitioner's instructions are important actions the person can take to prevent aspiration.</p>
--	---