About Tube Feeding

This information explains the different types of feeding tubes that can be used to help give you the nutrients you need while you can’t eat, swallow safely, or maintain your weight.

Review the tube feeding resource your nurse or doctor gave you for more information specific to your type of feeding tube.

Types of Feeding Tubes

**Nasogastric (NG) tube**
- An NG tube is placed through your nose, down your throat, into your esophagus (food pipe), and then into your stomach.

**Percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) tube**
- A PEG tube goes from an opening in your abdominal wall into your stomach.
- This tube is placed using an endoscope. An endoscope is a flexible tube with a camera at the end used to look at the inside of your body.

**Percutaneous endoscopic jejunostomy (PEJ) tube**
- A PEJ tube goes from an opening in your abdominal wall into your jejunum (small intestine), skipping past your stomach.
- This tube is placed using an endoscope.
- A pump must be used for feedings with a PEJ tube.
Button

- A PEG or PEJ tube may be replaced by a button. The button lies flat on your abdomen (belly) and is more comfortable for long-term use.
- An adapter must be used for feedings with a button.

Interventional radiology (IR) or surgical gastrostomy tube (GT)

- A surgical GT goes from an opening in your abdominal wall into your stomach.

IR or surgical jejunostomy tube (JT)

- A JT goes from an opening in your abdomen into your jejunum.
- A pump must be used for feedings with a JT tube.

PEG-J (Super PEG)

- A PEG-J (also called a Super PEG) is a tube within a tube. It goes from an opening in your abdomen into your stomach.
- A pump must be used for feedings with a PEG-J.

This tube can be used to drain fluid from your stomach.
- This tube has an extension that goes into your jejunum for feeding.
- A pump must be used for feedings with a PEG-J.

Tips for Tube Feeding

**Formula:** ________________
**Goal:** ________________ cans or milliliters (mL) per day

Follow these guidelines to prevent aspiration if you’re tube feeding. For more information about preventing aspiration (when food or liquid goes into your airway instead of your esophagus), read our resource *How to Prevent Aspiration* (www.mskcc.org/pe/prevent_aspiration).

- Sit up straight when tube feeding, if you can. You can walk around during your
feeding, if you wish.

- If you’re getting your tube feeding in bed, use a wedge pillow to lift yourself up. You can buy a wedge pillow online or at your local surgical supply store.

- Stay in an upright position (at least 45 degrees) for at least 1 hour after you finish your tube feeding (see Figure 1). **Don’t lie down for 1 hour after your feeding.**

- If possible, always keep the head of your bed elevated using a wedge pillow.

![Figure 1. Sitting up at a 45-degree angle](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Bolus Method</strong></th>
<th><strong>Gravity Method</strong></th>
<th><strong>Pump Method</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give _____ can(s) 3 4 5 times a day.</td>
<td>Give _____ can(s) 3 4 5 times a day over ____ minutes.</td>
<td>Start by giving _____ mL per hour over ____ hours.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flush your tube with 30 to 60 mL of water before and after each feeding.</td>
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<td>Increase the rate by _____ mL per hour, every 24 hours, until you reach your goal rate of _____ mL per hour, per day.</td>
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Taking Medication Through Your Feeding Tube

Check with your pharmacist or nurse practitioner before you take any medication through your feeding tube. Review the tube feeding resource your nurse or doctor gave you for more instructions.

Cleaning Your Tube Feeding Supplies

Rinse your tube feeding supplies with warm water and allow them to dry before your next feeding.

Ordering Supplies

Review your tube feeding resource for more information.

To order more supplies or formula, contact your home care agency.

Home care agency: ____________________________
Phone number: ____________________________

Home care agency contact person: ____________________________
Phone number: ____________________________

Follow-up Care

Your nurse practitioner will schedule an appointment for you in the nutrition clinic. If you can’t keep your appointment, call your doctor or the Clinical Nutrition Office at 212-639-6984.

Call Your Doctor or Nurse if You:

- Start to cough at the beginning of or during your feeding.
  - If this happens, stop your feeding right away.
- Have a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher.
- Have diarrhea (loose or watery bowel movements).
- Are constipated (have fewer bowel movements than usual).
- Are vomiting (throwing up).
- Feel bloated or have stomach cramps.
- Have pain, redness, or drainage at your tube site.
- Aren’t able to flush your tube.
- Have dry skin.
- Are very thirsty.
- Have shortness of breath.
- Feel tired or confused.
- Have swollen ankles, feet, or legs.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, call the Clinical Nutrition Office at 212-639-6984 and ask for the outpatient nurse practitioner.

You can reach the office Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. After 5:00 PM, during the weekend, and on holidays, call 212-639-2000 and ask for the GI/nutrition fellow or nurse practitioner on call.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.