Giving Medicines Through Your Feeding Tube

You are going home with a feeding tube. Follow the directions below to give medicine through your feeding tube.

Supplies

- A 60 mL or larger syringe
- 2 cups of room temperature water or sterile water if ordered by your doctor
- A medicine cup marked in milliliters (mL)
- A syringe or medicine spoon marked in milliliters (mL)

Important Information

- Some medicines should not be mixed with tube feeding formula. Tell your doctor or pharmacist about all the medicines you take, including all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, supplements and herbal products.

- Before crushing any pills, check with your doctor or pharmacist. Some medicines should not be crushed or put through your tube.

Flush your feeding tube before, in between, and after each time you give medicine to prevent your tube from clogging.

How to Give Your Medicine

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
2. Check the placement of your feeding tube as you were told by your doctor or nurse.
3. Sit upright in a chair or raise the head of your bed to at least a 30 degree angle. You may also use pillows to prop yourself up in bed.
4. Prepare each medicine as you were told by your doctor or pharmacist:
   - Measure the correct amount of liquid medicine.
   - If liquid medicine is not available, crush your pills into a fine powder and dissolve it in 15 mL or more of room temperature water.

5. Remove the plunger from the syringe.

6. If your feeding tube does not have a clamp, pinch the tube and open the cap at the end of your tube.

7. Put the tip of the syringe into your feeding tube.

8. Raise the syringe above your stomach.

9. Slowly flush your tube with 30 mL of room temperature water before giving the medicine.

10. Pour the medicine into the syringe. With the syringe raised above your stomach allow the medicine to flow into your tube by gravity.

11. Pour 15 mL or more of water into your medicine cup to rinse out all of the medicine. Use the water in the cup to flush your feeding tube.

12. **Never mix medicines together in the syringe.** If you need to take more than one medicine at the same time, give each medicine separately. The order in which you give the medicines may help them flow through the tube. You should give medicines in the following order:
   - Liquid medicines
   - Then medicines that need to be dissolved
   - Then thick medicines last

13. Always flush your tube with 30 mL of room temperature water after all medicines have been given.

14. Remove the syringe and clamp the tube or close the cap.

15. Wash the syringe and plunger with soap and warm water. Rinse well and air dry.

16. If you keep a record of the amount of fluid you put through your tube, include the amount of water you used with all your medicines.

**Call your doctor if you have problems giving medicine through your feeding tube or if you are not able to flush your feeding tube.**

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