Syringe Bolus Tube Feedings

Syringe bolus tube feedings are given at set times of day, often at meal times. This type of feeding may be done to take in a large amount of tube feeding at one time. It also gives you the freedom to move about and keep your normal routines when you are not using the feeding tube. A dietitian will give you information on the type, amount and times to give your bolus tube feeding.

Supplies

- Measuring cup
- Tube feeding formula
- 60 mL or larger syringe that fits the tip of your tube
- Room temperature water – use sterile water if prescribed by your doctor

How to Give the Tube Feeding

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
2. If your tube feeding formula is stored in the refrigerator, allow it to warm to room temperature for 20 minutes. This helps prevent bloating and cramping.
3. Check your tube placement before each feeding. Read the handout, Checking for Tube Placement.
4. Check for stomach residual before each feeding. Read the handout, Checking for Stomach Residuals.
5. Sit up at a 45 degree angle or more during your tube feeding and for 30 to 60 minutes after your feeding. This will help prevent the tube feeding formula from coming back up from your stomach and going into your lungs.

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

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

7. Remove the plunger from the barrel of the syringe.

8. Put the tip of the syringe into the end of your feeding tube. If your tube has a second opening or Y-end, clamp it off.

9. Raise the syringe above your stomach. Pour the ordered amount of room temperature water into the syringe to flush and unclamp your feeding tube.

10. Once the water has gone through your tube, pour the amount of formula your doctor or dietitian ordered into the syringe. Allow the formula to flow in slowly by gravity. The higher you hold up the syringe, the faster the formula will flow.

11. After all the formula has been given, pour the amount of room temperature water your doctor or dietitian ordered into the syringe to flush your feeding tube again.

12. Remove the syringe from your tube and clamp the tube.

13. Clean the syringe with soap and warm water. Rinse well and air dry. Store in a clean container.

14. Store any leftover, opened formula in your refrigerator, covered. This formula must be thrown away after 48 hours. Allow your formula to warm to room temperature for 20 minutes before your next feeding.