



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Gastrostomy Feedings

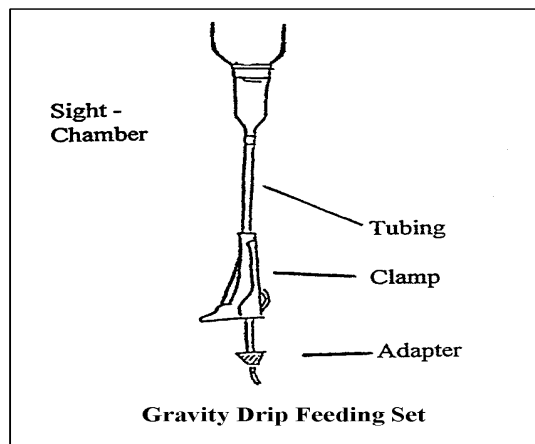
Your child needs gastrostomy tube feedings because they are having a hard time swallowing or are not able to maintain good nutrition. A special tube has been placed into your child's stomach for you to use to give the feeding. Getting good nutrition through the tube will help child grow and stay healthy

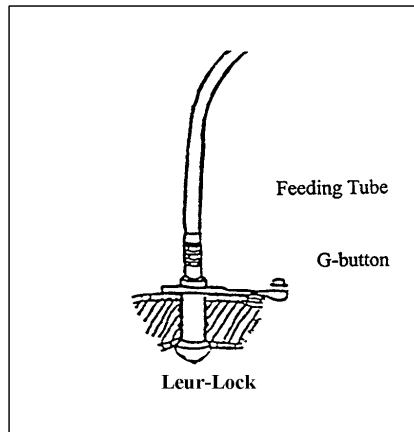
Feeding your child gravity method:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Gather the supplies
 - Gravity feeding set.
 - Continuous feeding extension set (for G-button or Mic-Key® only).
 - Measuring cup with pouring spout.
 - Formula or blenderized feeding as ordered by your child's doctor.
 - Glass of water (optional).
3. Use formula at room temperature. Keep formula that has been opened in the refrigerator to be used later.
4. Use only the amount of formula you will need.
5. Take it from the refrigerator about 30 minutes before the feeding.
6. Put 2 or 3 drops of formula on your wrist before feeding. The formula should feel warm not hot or cold.

Gravity Method

1. Close the clamp on the feeding.
2. Pour the formula into the bag.
3. If not using a pump, hang the bag high on a hook and squeeze the drip chamber to fill it halfway with formula.
4. Open the clamp so that the formula fills the tubing and there is no air.
5. Close the clamp
6. For the G-tube, insert the catheter tip for the feeding tube into the G-tube.



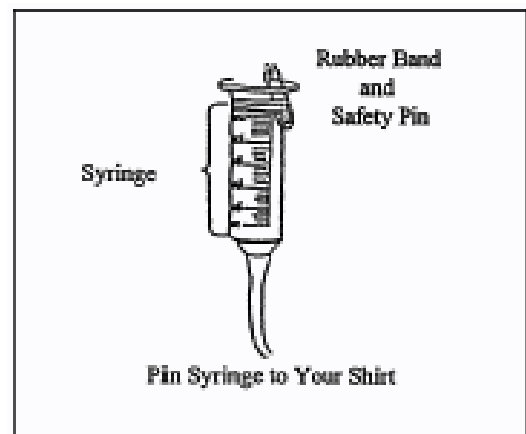


1. If your child has a G-button, you will need to attach a feeding tube to the feeding system and fill it with formula.
2. After all of the tubing contains formula, clamp the system.
3. Next, open the flap of the G-button or Mic-Key® and attach the open end of the feeding tube to the button.
4. Open the clamp when you are ready to begin the feeding.

B. Syringe method

1. Wash your hands
2. Gather your supplies
 - Catheter tip syringe for G-tube.
 - Feeding tube and Leur-Lock syringe for G-button or Mic-Key®.
 - Measuring cup.
 - Formula or blenderized feeding as ordered by your child's doctor.
 - Glass of water (optional).
 - Rubber band.
 - Clamp for G-tube.
 - Safety pin.
3. If your child has a G-tube, insert the catheter tip syringe into the open end of the tube.

If your child has a G-button or Mic-Key®, open the flap on the button and insert the bolus feeding tube.
4. Attach the Leur-Lock syringe to the open end of the feeding tube.
5. Pour the formula into the syringe until it is half full. Filling the syringe full can cause spillage if your child coughs or moves. Next, unclamp the tube. Hold the tip to the syringe no higher than your child's shoulders. If the feeding does not start to flow, milk the tube by squeezing it in a downward stroke.
6. Make sure you and your child are sitting comfortably. To free your hands, you can pin the syringe to your shirt at shoulder height. This can be done by wrapping a rubber band around the top of syringe and pinning the band to your shirt.



General feeding guidelines for both gravity and syringe method

1. For a gastrostomy feeding, your child's head must be raised.
 - For an infant, you can hold him/her in the curve of your arm while feeding (cuddling position).
 - If your child is older, you can feed him or her in a high chair or any seat as long as their head is raised.
 - If your child is fed in these positions, hang the feeding set on a hook in the room.



2. The feeding should take the same amount of time as a regular feeding or meal, at least 20-30 minutes.
 - If your child cries during the feeding, stop the feeding until your child is quiet. This can be done by clamping or pinching the tube with your finger and thumb.

3. Eating is a social time so make the feeding a happy time for your child. If your child needs to suck follow the instructions given to you by your child's occupational therapist or nurse.

4. After the feeding, add water to clear the feeding from the tube. Your child's nurse will tell you how much to use. Then for the G-tube, clamp the tube and the feeding system and remove it.

5. For the G-button, close the clamp and remove the feeding tube and the feeding system.

6. Any medicine given through the tube should be finely ground and dissolved in water or given as a liquid to prevent a blockage in the tube. Giving medicine at the beginning of the feeding helps it to be absorbed. Some medicines may need to be given on an "empty stomach". When giving more than one medicine, flush the tube with a small amount of water between medicines, before starting feedings.

* Remember to tell your child's doctor that your child has a gastrostomy and that pills may clog the tube.

How do I clean the equipment?

Wash the syringe, feeding tube, and measuring cup in hot, soapy water. Rinse with hot water and dry. If formula is caked on the syringe or tubing, rinsing with a carbonated beverage before cleaning will help remove it.

Important information:

1. Always prepare your child's formula using the instructions given by your child's doctor or dietician. Never give more or less of the formula amount than your child's doctor ordered.
2. If your child seems hungry after the feeding, ask your child's doctor or dietician about increasing the feeding.
3. Formula feedings are complete meals and will meet all your child's growing needs. Solid foods should only be added when the doctor or dietician orders it.
4. In some cases, children who are fed by gastrostomy may be able to take some solid foods by mouth. Your child's doctor, dietician, occupational therapist, or speech therapist will suggest which solid foods and the best way to feed your child.
5. If your child's doctor or dietician tells you to give your child solid foods through the gastrostomy tube, follow the instructions carefully.
6. Solid foods baby, junior, or table foods must be blended with formula or water until they are thin enough to flow through the tube. Feedings are too thick if they stick to the tube or cause a blockage.
7. If diarrhea occurs, lengthen the feeding time by 15 minutes. If the problem continues, call your child's doctor or dietician. Inform them of any changes in your child's feedings including any new medicine being given.
8. If your child's stomach becomes hard and swollen after a feeding, burping the tube or button may help.
 - For the G-tube, attach an empty syringe to the tube and unclamp it. This will allow air to escape.
 - To burp through the Bard® Button, a special sized decompression tube must be used.
 - With the Mic-Key® Button attach the feeding adapter and open the end of the tube to air. Your child's nurse will show you how to do this.
 - Wait one hour. If the stomach is still swollen and your child acts as if they are in pain, call your child's doctor or the Emergency room for advice.
9. Constipation (hard, dry bowel movements) may become a problem with long-term tube feedings. Check with your child's doctor if this becomes a problem. Ask about using a formula with fiber or adding fiber to your child's feedings. Also, ask about adding fruit juice (apple or prune) or a small amount of light karo syrup (one teaspoon if your child is less than one year of age), to the feeding.
10. The G-tube most often has a device to secure it at the base where it meets the skin. The device keeps the tube in the proper place and prevents it from going in further. Before each feeding, pull back gently on the tube until it feels snug.
11. The skin around the G-tube should be cleaned at least once a day with a mild soap and water and dried thoroughly.
12. If the tube comes out and you have been taught to replace it, do so. If not, place a towel over the opening. Take your child to his/her doctor or the Emergency Room to have the tube replaced as soon as possible. The tube should be replaced within two hours.
13. If you have problems with leakage around the G-tube or G-button, contact your child's physician.

Speak up if you have any questions or concerns

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