

There are different ways to provide a tube feeding.

Tube feedings may be:

- **Bolus or Intermittent:** formula is often given at mealtimes or spread out during the day at specific times as directed by your health care professional
For example, feed at 8 am, noon, 6 pm or every 4 to 6 hours
- **Continuous:** formula is delivered all day or for many hours throughout the day and/or night, typically delivered by a feeding pump
- A mix of these two methods

Depending on the tube feeding plan, the formula may be delivered by:

- **Syringe** (for bolus feeding)
- **Gravity** (for intermittent feedings) May not be appropriate for thicker formulas made with real food ingredients or blenderized formulas
- **Feeding Pump** (for continuous feeding and some intermittent feedings)

A feeding method (the timing and delivery) may be chosen because of:

- The type and location of the feeding tube you have
- The reason you need the tube feeding
- How often you need tube feeding
- How you manage your tube feeding at home

Syringe Feeding

Uses a large syringe to deliver the formula. The formula can be gently pushed into your feeding tube using the syringe plunger or it can flow from the syringe into your feeding tube using gravity.

Gravity Feeding

Uses a feeding bag and tubing which you hang on a pole above the level of your stomach. Gravity will move the formula from the bag through the tubing and into your feeding tube.

Feeding Pump

A special device that controls the timing and amount of formula given. Formula flows from a feeding bag or pre-filled container through tubing that runs into the pump and then into your feeding tube.

Administering Your Tube Feeding – SYRINGE

Syringe Feeding Supplies:

- Formula
- Clean measuring cup with pour spout (optional)
- 60 mL syringe*
- Water (lukewarm)

Setting Up:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
2. Wipe the top of the formula container with clean, wet paper towel.
3. Mix the formula well by shaking or mixing as directed.
4. Pour formula into a clean measuring cup (or directly into the syringe once attached to your feeding tube or feeding tube extension).

Starting the Syringe Feeding:

1. To administer the feeding, sit or lie with your head elevated at least 30 degrees (about the height of two pillows) and remain in this position for 30 to 60 minutes after each feeding.
2. Open (unclamp or uncap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
3. Before starting the feeding, use a syringe to flush your feeding tube with 30 mL of lukewarm water or the amount directed by your healthcare professional.



*Or appropriate size syringe directed by your healthcare professional.

Not using a plunger in the syringe:

4. Remove plunger from the syringe.
5. Pinch, clamp, or fold over your feeding tube to stop the flow of any fluid.
6. Fill syringe with the prescribed amount of formula and release (unpinch/unclamp/unfold) feeding tube to allow formula to flow by gravity into your stomach.
7. Raise or lower the height of the syringe to increase or decrease the feeding rate.
8. If indicated, add more formula to the syringe until you have received your full prescribed amount and close (recap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
9. After feeding is complete, close or recap your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
10. Replace the plunger into the syringe and draw up 30 mL of lukewarm water or the amount directed by your healthcare professional.
11. Open (uncap) the feeding tube and reattach the syringe and flush feeding tube.
12. Detach the syringe from the feeding tube and close (recap) the feeding tube.
13. Clean, rinse, and dry your equipment after each feeding.
14. Replace your syringes as directed by your home care supplier.

Using a plunger in the syringe:

4. Leave the plunger in the syringe.
5. Pinch, clamp, or fold over your feeding tube to stop the flow of any fluid.
6. Remove the syringe from your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
7. Recap your feeding tube.
8. Draw up formula into the syringe by pulling up the plunger.
9. Open (uncap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension and attach syringe.
10. Slowly push on the top of the plunger to force the formula into your feeding tube.
11. If indicated, add more formula to the syringe until you have received your full prescribed amount and close (recap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
12. After feeding is complete, close or recap your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
13. Draw up 30 mL of lukewarm water or the amount directed by your healthcare professional.
14. Open (uncap) the feeding tube and reattach the syringe and flush feeding tube.
15. Detach the syringe from the feeding tube and close (recap) the feeding tube.
16. Clean, rinse, and dry your equipment after each feeding.
17. Replace your syringes as directed by your home care supplier.

Administering Your Tube Feeding – GRAVITY

Gravity Feeding Supplies:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding bag/container | <input type="checkbox"/> Tubing (gravity set) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formula | <input type="checkbox"/> Pole |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 60 mL syringe* | <input type="checkbox"/> Water (lukewarm) |

Setting Up:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
2. Wipe the top of the formula container with clean, wet paper towel.
3. Mix the formula well by shaking or mixing as directed.
4. Fill the feeding container with _____ mL or _____ containers of formula and close as instructed by your healthcare provider.
5. Hang the feeding container on the pole so it is at least 18 inches above the level of your stomach.
6. If using a pre-filled feeding bag, shake the bag and connect to the gravity set as directed and continue from this step.
7. Open the clamp on the flow regulator until the formula flows towards the end of the tubing to approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch above the connector to avoid spilling formula into the moat of the ENFit® connector.
8. Close the clamp on the flow regulator.
9. Make sure the drip chamber is approximately half full.



Starting the Gravity Feeding:

1. To administer the feeding, sit or lie with your head elevated at least 30 degrees (or about the height of two pillows) and remain in this position 30 to 60 minutes after the feeding.
2. Open (unclamp or uncap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
3. Before starting the feeding, use the syringe to flush your feeding tube with 30 mL of lukewarm water or the amount directed by your healthcare professional.
4. Connect the end of the gravity set tubing to your feeding tube or feeding tube extension (unclamp feeding tube or feeding tube extension if applicable).
5. Open the flow regulator clamp to adjust the flow rate to _____ drips or _____ mL per minute.
Or slowly adjust the roller clamp up or down to increase or decrease the flow of formula.
6. Each feeding should take about _____ minutes.
7. After the feeding, close and disconnect the feeding set.
8. Using the syringe, flush your feeding tube again with 30 mL of lukewarm water or the amount directed by your healthcare professional.
9. Close (reclamp or recap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
10. Rinse the feeding container, tubing and syringe with warm water after each feeding and let dry.
11. If using a pre-filled bag of formula, throw it away when empty or no later than 48 hours after starting the feeding.
12. Replace your gravity set container with tubing and syringes as directed by your home care supplier.

Administering Your Tube Feeding – PUMP

Pump Feeding Supplies:

- Pump
- Feeding container and tubing (pump set)
- Formula
- Pole or feeding pump backpack
- 60 mL syringe*
- Water (lukewarm)



Setting Up:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
2. Wipe the top of the formula container with clean, wet paper towel.
3. Mix the formula well by shaking or mixing as directed.
4. Pour formula into feeding container and close cap. To reduce the risk of bacterial contamination, fill your feeding container with just enough formula for up to 8 hours. If you are using powdered formula, fill your feeding container with enough formula for up to 4 hours.
5. Hang the feeding container on the pole above the feeding pump or place securely inside the backpack.
6. If you are using a pre-filled feeding bag, shake the bag and connect to the pump set as directed and continue from this step.
7. Since every pump is different, follow the instructions provided by your healthcare professional to set up and operate your pump.

Starting the Pump Feeding:

1. To administer the feeding, sit or lie with your head elevated at least 30 degrees (about the height of two pillows) and remain in this position for 30 to 60 minutes after the feeding.
2. Prime your feeding pump and set flow rate on pump as directed by your healthcare professional to the recommended mL per hour. (_____mL/hour)
3. Open (uncap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
4. Before starting the feeding, use the syringe to flush your feeding tube with 30 mL of lukewarm water or the amount directed by your healthcare professional.
5. Connect the end of the pump set tubing to your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
6. If applicable, open the clamp or roller clamp on the pump set tubing.
7. Start your pump to begin infusing the formula.
8. If additional formula is needed for hang times >8 hours, rinse out the feeding bag and tubing with lukewarm water before adding fresh formula. Refill your feeding bag again with just enough formula for up to 8 hours, 4 hours if using a powdered formula.
9. After the feeding, disconnect the pump set tubing from your feeding tube or feeding tube extension. Recap the end of the tubing with the plastic cap.
10. Using the syringe, flush your feeding tube again with 30 mL of lukewarm water or the amount directed by your healthcare professional.
11. Close (recap) your feeding tube or feeding tube extension.
12. Don't forget to rinse before refilling your feeding container with formula (at least every 8 hours).
13. If using a pre-filled bag of formula, throw it away when empty or no later than 48 hours after starting the feeding.
14. Replace your feeding bag, tubing and syringes as directed by your home care supplier.

*Or appropriate size syringe directed by your healthcare professional.