



HOMeward

A photograph of an elderly woman with short, wavy, light-colored hair and glasses, smiling and looking up at a healthcare professional. The professional is wearing a teal uniform and has her hand on the woman's shoulder. The background is a bright, light-colored wall. A large, semi-transparent blue and purple arc is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

HOME TUBE

Feeding Guide

Introduction

Welcome to the Nutricia Homeward Home Tube Feeding Guide. Nutricia Homeward is a service provided by Nutricia to facilitate your transition from hospital to home tube feeding.

This guide should be used together with your pump instruction booklet to answer questions you may have about tube feeding. You will also find further contact resources on the back of this booklet.



This guide is intended for patients or their carers who have been prescribed tube feeds and referred to the Nutricia Homeward Service by a Healthcare Professional.

The Nutrison range are Foods for Special Medical Purposes for the dietary management of disease related malnutrition in patients requiring enteral nutrition and must be used under medical supervision.



Home Tube Feeding Guide

Topics covered in this guide

What Is Enteral Nutrition And Why Am I On It?	6
Types Of Feeding Tubes	8
What You Need And Where To Get Them	9
Your Feeding Routine	11
Your Feeding Plan (Regimen)	12
Other Key Information For Feeding	13
Setting Up The Feed	14
How To Store And Handle Your Feed	15
Administration Of Medications	16
Things To Look Out For	17
Your Nutricia Homeward Support Team	18
Holiday Support Service	19
Your Nutrition Support Team	20
How To Use The Flocare Two Pack Connector	21
How To Use The Flocare Bolus Adaptor	22
Frequently Asked Questions	23
Notes	25



What's inside this guide?


Your healthcare professional has recommended tube feeding for you or the person you care for. As with anything new, it's natural to feel concerned or overwhelmed when you're first faced with the prospect of tube feeding. Asking questions, such as *"What happens next?"* and *"Can I manage this?"* is normal at this stage.

Adjusting to life with a feeding tube may take some time, and it's likely that more practical questions will arise as you get into a routine. Over time, with the right information and support, you will adapt and live confidently with tube feeding in your life.

Do not feel nervous about discussing any concerns and questions you have with the healthcare professionals involved in your care.

Many people want to learn more at this stage, and have expressed the need for more general tube feeding information and practical tips, so they feel more confident when handling a feeding tube.

The aim of this guide is to provide some information and easy-to follow guidance on the day-to-day aspects of tube feeding. With practice and support, all of these things will become second nature to you and your family or the person you care for.



"Feeling overwhelmed is perfectly acceptable and natural when starting anything new. Fully understanding the reason why you are going on tube feeding and the implications of this are really important in helping you cope and feel calm during this period.

Lisa, living with tube feeding





What is Enteral Nutrition and why am I on it?

Enteral nutrition (enteral nutrition support) is a term that describes taking nutrients into your body via your gastrointestinal tract. Tube feeding is a type of enteral nutrition support. In tube feeding, you use a tube that is placed in either your stomach or small intestine (a part of your gastrointestinal tract) to give your body nutrition. Your healthcare professional has recommended tube feeding for you so that you can give your body the nutrition it needs when you are unable or less able to take enough nutrition orally. The types of feeding tubes are described on page 8.

How will tube feeding help me?

Your healthcare professional has recommended tube feeding for you because you cannot take enough food orally. If you are unable to get enough nutrition from your diet, you are at risk of losing weight or developing nutritional deficiencies. Tube feeding will provide you with the nutrients needed to maintain weight and in some cases, support recovery, help respond to treatment, and maintain independence. The nutrition you take in through your feeding tube comes from a tube feed.

What is a tube feed?

Tube feeds are a liquid form of nourishment that contain the nutrients you need to maintain health. The nutrients in a tube feed are similar to what you would get from normal food and are digested in the same way. These include different carbohydrates, fat, protein, vitamins, minerals and water. Some tube feeds also have fibre. You may also take oral nutritional supplements via your feeding tube.

Are there different types of tube feeds?

There are lots of different types of tube feeds to suit people with different nutritional needs. Your needs depend on factors such as your age, weight, medical condition and whether you can still eat or drink. Your healthcare professional will advise which tube feed is most suitable for you.

Can I eat normal foods while being tube fed?

Your healthcare professional will let you know if it is safe for you to eat while tube feeding. Tube feeding may have been recommended for you because taking food orally is not safe anymore or it may be too difficult to get enough nutrition in this way. In this case, tube feeding will become your main or only source of nutrition and you will follow a tube feeding plan that provides enough nutrition to meet your individual needs. A dietitian or other healthcare professional will determine your nutritional needs and advise on the most suitable tube feed(s) for you.

Tube feeding may have been recommended for you as a means to 'top-up' your diet. If you are able to eat, you'll be given information about the types of food and amounts that are safe. If you're being tube fed because of a swallowing difficulty, you might be visited by a speech and language therapist in hospital and/or at home, who will advise you on what types of food are safest for you.



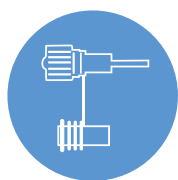
What is Enteral Nutrition and why am I on it?

What will my feed look like?

Tube feeds come in different packs, bottles and sizes. You may be recommended to take one or more tube feeds per day. These may come in a pack or bottle and the usual volumes are 500ml, 1000ml or 1500ml per pack or bottle. If you are bolus feeding (explained further on page 11), or need to use a combination of products to meet your unique needs, you may take oral nutritional supplements via your feeding tube. These come in smaller volumes such as 125mls, 200mls or even smaller doses. Your healthcare professional will recommend a tube feeding plan that meets your unique nutritional needs. They will consider your medical diagnosis and feeding routine when making this decision. Therefore, your tube feeding plan (what feed(s) you are taking and how much you take in a day) may change over time in response to your needs.

Alternatively, you may be recommended a powdered feed which can be made up to a liquid before you take it. Powdered feeds will come in a tin.





Types of feeding tubes

When in hospital, your healthcare professional will recommend the type of feeding tube that best suits your unique circumstances. The main types of feeding tubes are described below. Each feeding tube differs slightly in terms of placement, however their overall aim is the same — to provide you with the nutrients needed to maintain weight, and in some cases, support your recovery, help you respond to treatment, and maintain your independence.

You will have one of the following feeding tubes: (tick as appropriate)

1. Nasogastric

Often referred to as an **NG** tube. This is a feeding tube which is inserted through your nose and passes down into your stomach.

2. Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy

Often referred to as a **PEG**. This is a feeding tube which is inserted directly into your stomach through an incision in the skin.

3. Jejunostomy

Often referred to as a **JEJ**. This is a feeding tube which is inserted directly into your small intestine through an incision in the skin.

A jejunostomy can also be inserted through the stomach and extended into the small intestine. This is called a **PEG-J**.

4. Balloon Gastrostomy Tube

Often referred to as a **BGT**. This is a feeding tube which is inserted directly into the stomach and held inside the stomach via a water-filled balloon.

5. Balloon Gastrostomy Tube – Low Profile Device

Often referred to as a **button**, this is a low profile feeding tube which is inserted into the stomach and held inside the stomach via a water filled balloon.

6. Naso-Jejunal

Often referred to as an **NJ** tube. This is a feeding tube that is inserted through the nose into the intestine.

7. Radiologically Inserted Gastrostomy

Often referred to as a **RIG** tube. This is a feeding tube which is inserted into your stomach. X Rays will be used to place this feeding tube. Instructions on the type of RIG tube inserted will be provided to you by the hospital.

Your healthcare professional will provide further advice regarding your feeding tube.



What you need and where to get them

Once the feeding tube has been placed, your dietitian or doctor will advise you when it is safe to start tube feeding. You will probably have many questions about what you need to get started. You will receive training on how to tube feed in hospital and/or at home. Listed below are some of the things you will need to start tube feeding and where you can get them.

Items you will need:	Provided by:
✓ Pump - A feeding pump delivers the feed through the giving set at a controlled rate recommended by the dietitian.	Nutricia Homeward
✓ Pump frame/stand - A feeding pump frame is designed to hold the tube feed and feeding pump.	Nutricia Homeward
✓ Feed - As outlined on pages 6 & 7.	Pharmacist
✓ Feeding plan (regimen).	Dietitian
✓ Giving sets & accessories - A giving set is a flexible tube which helps to deliver the feed. It attaches the tube feed container to the feeding pump.	Your local health centre or retail pharmacy
✓ Syringes - Syringes can be used to administer feed, water or medication. Syringes come in different types and different sizes (e.g. 10 or 60 ml).*	Your local health centre or retail pharmacy
✓ Other - e.g. pH indicator strips to check position of the tube (mandatory for nasogastric tubes).	Ask your dietitian for advice

Where do you get the feeding pump and feeding pump frame?

- The feeding pump and its frame are supplied **on loan** by Nutricia Homeward on your discharge from hospital.
- Flocare Infinity pumps require servicing to ensure that they are in good working order.
- To check the service date on the Flocare Infinity Pump please see the side or back of pump. (see image below).
- When your pump is due for a service please contact Nutricia Homeward on our Freephone number below. We will send you a replacement pump and arrange to pick up your existing pump.
- Please refer to the relevant Flocare Infinity Pump instruction book and guide for information on maintaining your Flocare Infinity Pump. This guide is also a troubleshooter in the event that a malfunction or alarm is activated.
- You can call our Freephone number for further help and advice: **1800 22 1800**.
- As the Flocare Infinity Pump is provided on loan from Nutricia Homeward, please return the pump when it is no longer required. Please call 1800 22 1800 and we will arrange collection.

*Please note: You may have different types of syringes. Some may not be suitable for flushing and feeding.





What you need and where to get them

Where do you get your feed?


- Your dietitian will recommend the type of feed that best meets your needs.
- An initial supply of feed will be provided by Nutricia Homeward when you are discharged from hospital.
- You will be given a prescription to take to your local pharmacy.
- It is important to remember to renew your prescription and to ask your pharmacy to reorder your feed at least a week before your supply runs out.

Where do you get giving sets and accessories?

- An initial supply of giving sets (and accessories if required) will be provided by Nutricia Homeward when you are discharged from hospital.
- Your dietitian will have arranged for your first month's supply to be ordered from your local health centre or retail pharmacy.
- It is important to make sure your local health centre or retail pharmacy reorders your giving sets and/or accessories at least one week before they run out.

Where do you get syringes?

- Your dietitian will have arranged for your first month's supply to be ordered from your local health centre or retail pharmacy. You will need a small supply of these from the hospital until your order arrives.



“Tube feeding has saved my life. Think of it as allowing you to retain as much of your independence as possible. Accommodating a tube can be daunting and the fact that you can't eat anymore can be tough – but at the end of the day, I'm grateful for the fact that it keeps me alive. Keeping your humour alive and realising you'll have your good and your bad days is important.”

Lisa, living with tube feeding



Your feeding routine

When it comes to deciding on the best tube feeding routine your dietitian will discuss the options with you based on your needs. Depending on your nutritional requirements, medical needs and lifestyle, there are three ways that tube feeding can be given:

Continuous feeding

Feed is given slowly over a number of hours using a pump that controls the flow rate of the feed. Continuous feeding can take place during the day, overnight or a combination of both.

Bolus feeding

Feed is given in smaller volumes (e.g. 200ml) several times throughout the day, with the use of a pump, gravity, or a syringe.

Combination of both

A combination of these methods can be chosen based on a number of factors to give you more flexibility.

If you are bolus feeding, you and your healthcare professional can work together to determine the times that suit you best to take your boluses of feed. You may like to take your boluses at mealtimes or you may choose to take them at different times so that feeding fits in with your lifestyle and other medical treatments. If you are taking some diet orally, you may choose to eat during the day and feed at night. Alternatively, you may choose to feed through your feeding tube after meals if you cannot eat enough food by mouth.

Details of your feeding plan (regimen) can be recorded on the following page so you have all the information you need in one place. Please check with your dietitian that these details are correct.





Your feeding plan (Regimen)

The name(s) of my feed is

The pack / bottle size is

The amount of feed I take in 1 day is

The amount of sterile or cooled boiled water I take in 1 day is

The flow rate I set on the pump is

mls/hour

The amount of water I use to flush is

Continuous feeding:

Feeding instructions

Bolus feeding:

Feeding instructions

mls of

To be given at the following times every day



Other key information for feeding

My pump is a Flocare Infinity:

Serial no.

Next service date

My giving set is:

Order code:

Flocare Infinity pack giving set

95347

Flocare Infinity mobile giving set

101586

Flocare Infinity pack giving set (without med port)

95349

Flocare Infinity mobile giving set (without med port)

86484

Flocare Infinity bottle/universal giving set

101587

Flocare Infinity pack and bottle set

188270

Flocare Infinity pack and bottle set - mobile

130599

Other

My container is:

Order code:

Flocare container 500ml

35746

Flocare container 1 litre

35724

Flocare reservoir 1.3 litre

570139

Accessories:

Order code:

Flocare two pack connector

569915

Flocare bolus adaptor

190390

Universal Adaptor (40mm Screw Cap to Enplus)

189114

Other

Syringes:



Setting up the feed

When setting up the feed, it is important that everything is kept as clean as possible in order to prevent contamination of the feed. Wipe down the area where the feed will be set up with a clean cloth and wash your hands. For specific instructions on pump set up please refer to your pump instruction booklet for a step by step guide.

Make sure you have the following items:

✓ Feed	✓ Plan (regimen)
✓ Pump	✓ Giving set
✓ Pump frame	✓ For flushing – Sterile or cooled boiled water and a single use syringe unless otherwise advised by your healthcare professional





How to store and handle your feed

Nutricia feeding systems have been designed to reduce the risk of feed contamination and have proven to be extremely safe. If feed becomes contaminated, you can develop complications such as vomiting and diarrhoea. Therefore it is very important that you store your feed correctly. Contamination can be introduced at any time during the setting up process. To reduce the risk of contaminating the feed, you should adhere to the following advice regarding storage and handling.

Storage:

- Feed and equipment needs to be kept clean and could be damaged if kept at the wrong temperature.
- Store unopened feed and equipment between 5°C-25°C in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight – it is NOT necessary to refrigerate unopened feed.
- Avoid placing feed and equipment next to radiators or other sources of heat.
- Once open, store closed bottle in a refrigerator (less than 5°C) for a maximum of 24 hours. Discard any unused contents after 24 hours.

Handling:

- Wash your hands before starting to set up feed.
- To lower the risk of contamination, set up equipment using a clean work area. Avoid touching any internal part of the feed container, giving set or feeding tube with your hands. Avoid unnecessary handling of equipment.
- Sterile feeds can be hung for up to 24 hours from opening, provided they are handled using a clean technique and have been kept as a closed system i.e. remain connected to the giving set.
 - If you are using a collapsible bottle and have removed the cap (open system), then the feed has a hanging time of maximum 8 hours.
 - Powdered feeds made up with liquid, have a limited hanging time of no more than four hours to prevent microbiological contamination.
 - It is advisable to consult with your healthcare professional to discuss your individual needs in terms of hang times; taking into account the type of feed you are using and your method of administration.
- Feed containers must not be topped up with feed once feeding has started; the total volume must be decanted at the start of the new feed.
- Dispose of any unused feed after the above time periods.
- Change giving sets every 24 hours, or more frequently if advised by your healthcare professional.
- Before disposing of enteral feeding waste products you will need to check with your healthcare professional, local hospital or authority that it is acceptable to dispose of them in your normal household rubbish.
- Check with your healthcare professional which type of water is recommended for flushing. You can use sterile or cooled boiled water and a single use syringe unless otherwise advised by the healthcare professional.
- Check that the pack/bottle is undamaged and unopened and observe the expiry date prior to use.
- Always gently shake the bottle or pack before use. If the feed appears to have curdled, use a different pack/bottle and contact Nutricia Homeward.



Administration of Medications

For administration of medications via the feeding tube please follow the instructions provided by your healthcare professional. It is important not to use the feeding tube for the administration of medications which have not been prescribed as suitable for enteral use. If you require further information on taking medications, contact your pharmacist or healthcare professional for advice.

Please remind your pharmacist or GP if you are prescribed medication that it will be administered via your feeding tube.





Things to look out for

Positioning

Positioning yourself correctly and maintaining the correct position during and after tube feeding, will allow the feed to settle in your stomach and help to prevent complications. If you are feeding whilst lying down, it is important to position yourself at an angle of at least 30° - 45° (approx 2 pillows high) during feeding and for at least one hour afterwards. This advice should be followed unless otherwise specified by your healthcare professional.

Leakage or Discomfort

If you experience any leakage around the feeding site or any pain or discomfort whilst using the feeding tube, you should stop using the feeding tube immediately. This advice should also be followed if you notice that your feeding tube has changed position or fallen out*. You should then contact your GP or healthcare professional immediately for advice. If you cannot reach your GP or healthcare professional, you should seek emergency assistance.

Breathing Problems

In the unlikely event that you start to feel short of breath, stop feeding immediately and seek urgent medical advice, or call for an ambulance.

Temperature

Tube feeds should always be administered at room temperature (20-25°C). Cold feeds can lead to gastrointestinal intolerance problems, such as upset stomach, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea. Prior to tube feeding, check if your feed is at room temperature and if not, allow time for the feed to come to room temperature before feeding. However, do not heat the tube feed (i.e. with hot water or in a microwave) as there's a risk of 'cooking' the formula, which will reduce its nutritional value. Warming the tube feed can also increase the risk of infection.

Other Considerations

If you experience significant weight gain or loss, diarrhoea, constipation, wind or back pain, you should contact your GP or healthcare professional for advice.

*Before feeding, you should always ensure that your feeding tube is in the correct position as advised by your healthcare professional.



Your Nutricia Homeward Support Team

Nutricia's Homeward service, together with your dietitian and your public health nurse, will help to make the transition from hospital to home as easy as possible for you.



24 Hour Freephone Support

Our experts are available to answer any questions regarding your pump or giving set.

- ✓ Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- ✓ Covered by customer care and qualified nurses

 1800 22 1800



Online Support

Interactive training tools & support available online:

WWW.NUTRICIAFLOCARE.COM

WWW.NUTRICIA.IE



Scan here to visit our tubefeeding patient hub



Emergency Pump Delivery

You can always get a replacement pump **24 hours a day, 365 days a year**. Just call our **24 hour freephone support line on 1800 22 1800**.

- ✓ If at any time you need a replacement pump we will arrange for a new one to be delivered directly to your home



Holiday Support Service

We support your holiday by **organising to send your feed, pump and accessories to your holiday destination*** so you can relax the moment you arrive.

Quick tips when using our holiday service

1. Be sure to contact us at least 6 weeks in advance of your holiday.
2. Ensure you have your feed ordered from the pharmacy in time for when we collect it.
3. Have contact details ready for the person who will receive your feed at your holiday destination.

“You'll be surprised how accommodating people are, no matter where you are. We've travelled with our son all around the U.S., St. Vincent, Turkey, France, Ascot, Germany and Mauritius. When we've lost or broken something, it wasn't that hard to get it replaced no matter where we were. It's amazing how many people have been willing to help us out because we're with someone who needs it.”

John (Caring for his son)

*exceptions apply



Holiday support service

If you are planning a trip overseas, our Nutricia Homeward Coordinators can advise you on how to transport your feed and devices. You can contact Nutricia Homeward by Freephone on the numbers below.



Before you go – essential advice

✓ Pack a plug adaptor

If you are travelling outside Ireland and the UK you will need a plug adaptor for your pump so that you can charge it. A standard travel plug adaptor should suffice but please contact our Nutricia Homeward team if you have any queries on this.

✓ Documentation

Carry documentation with you such as the GP letter or a copy of the completed airline medical form should airline personnel require it.

✓ Additional fluids

If you are going to a warmer climate, you may need to flush the tube with extra water to prevent dehydration. Please contact your healthcare professional to get advice on this.

✓ Bottled water

If the tap water is not safe for drinking, we suggest using bottled water for hand washing before commencing any procedures. Use bottled water for washing your teeth also.

✓ Storage of feed

All unopened feed should be stored in a cool dry place (5°C-25°C) and away from direct sunlight. In either very cold or hot climates, make sure the feed is not stored at extreme temperatures.

✓ Oral food intake

If you can take normal diet in addition to your enteral feed, always make sure that it has been correctly cooked and there is minimal risk of food contamination.

✓ Telephone numbers

Always take the telephone numbers of your dietitian/hospital (plus personal hospital number), Nutricia Homeward and any others you think you might need in an emergency.

Nutricia Homeward Freephone:

Republic of Ireland: 1800 22 1800

International Phone Number:

00353 1 429 1828

Please note that the international number is not a Freephone number.



Your Nutrition Support Team

Complete details of your dietitian, public health nurse, local pharmacy and community dietitian below

Dietitian is:

and their phone number is:

bleep:

Public health nurse is:

and their phone number is:

Local pharmacy is:

and the phone number is:

Community dietitian (if applicable) is:

and their phone number is:

“I’m very happy to know that support is there.”

Nutricia Homeward patient





How to use the Flocare Two Pack Connector (If Applicable)

The Flocare two pack connector will allow you to connect two packs or bottles of feed or a pack/bottle of feed and sterile water to your giving set. The Flocare two pack connector has two purple ends and one white end.

You will need:

- Flocare 2-Pack Connector
- Flocare giving set
- Tube feed, as prescribed

Check all expiry dates and wash hands thoroughly

Open the packaging and lay contents on a clean dry surface

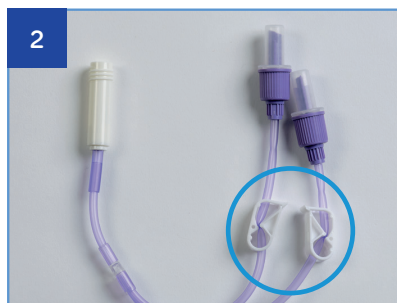


1



Remove the dust cap from the Flocare giving set and discard

2



Close both the clamps on the Flocare 2-Pack connector

3



Attach the white port of the Flocare 2-Pack connector to the end of the giving set and screw together tightly

4



Remove the dust caps from both ends of the 2-Pack connector

5



Remove the cap from both bottles of the prescribed tube feed (or water)

6



Attach the 2-Pack connector port to each of the bottles of prescribed tube feed (or water)

7



Using two z-hooks, hang the two bottles of feed on the stand by placing them back-to-back

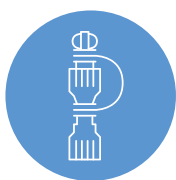
8



Insert the giving set into the pump and open the clamps on the 2-Pack connector

Programme the pump as advised by your healthcare professional.

*Please note, you will need to use the 'fill set' facility to prime your feed to the end of the giving set before you attach to your feeding tube.



How to use the Flocare Bolus Adaptor (If Applicable)

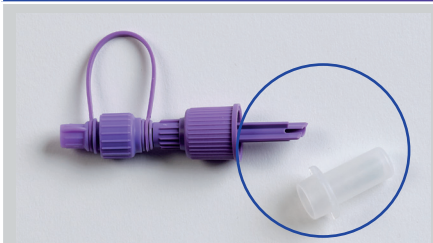
You will need

- Flocare Bolus Adaptor
- Tube feed, as prescribed
- Water for flushing
- A 60ml syringe

Check all expiry dates and wash hands thoroughly. Open the packaging and lay contents on a clean dry surface.



Step 1



Remove the dust cap from the bolus adaptor.

Step 2



Remove the cap from the prescribed tube feed.

Step 3



Insert bolus adaptor into bottle and screw firmly to ensure there is a tight seal.

Step 4



Remove cap from the bolus adaptor. Flush the feeding tube with prescribed amount of water.

Step 5



Attach the 60ml syringe to the bolus adaptor.

Step 6



Using the plunger of the syringe, gently withdraw the prescribed amount of feed.

Step 7

Attach the filled syringe onto the end of the feeding tube or extension set. Push the plunger gently to administer feed and repeat until prescribed amount has been administered.

Step 8

Flush the feeding tube with the prescribed amount of water.

Step 9



Reseal tube feed bottle by closing the bolus adaptor & store as directed.



Frequently Asked Questions

The feeding pump is not working. What do you do?

Read through the troubleshooting section in your pump instruction booklet. **If you have followed this and the pump is still not working call the Nutricia Homeward Freephone Helpline: 1800 22 1800.** Please phone as early in the day as possible, so we can assist you or send a replacement pump if necessary.

What do you do with giving sets and containers after they have been used?

Giving sets, reservoirs, containers, bolus adaptors, two pack connectors and used packs/bottles of feed can be disposed of with your household waste. Feed bottles with a recycling logo can be recycled.

If you need to take a break during feeding what do you do?

If giving sets are connected, disconnected and reconnected multiple times a day, the risk of any contamination is increased. If your dietitian and medical team have advised that you can take a break during feeding, you should disconnect the tube from the giving set and replace the end cap on the giving set. You then flush your feeding tube as instructed by your healthcare professional. If you are taking a short break for personal care or repositioning, you should not lie flat during this time. This is because it is advised to stay in an upright feeding position for one hour after feeding - see page 17 for more information. After this time, it is fine to lie flat until you commence feeding again. You can keep the feed at room temperature while you are having a break however the feed and the giving set must be discarded or used within 24hrs or earlier if advised by your healthcare professional. Always follow the advice of your dietitian and tube feed manufacturer regarding storage and hang times of your feed.

You are finished using your pump. What do you do?

It is important to return your pump to Nutricia Homeward when you have finished using it. **Returning your pump can be arranged by contacting the Nutricia Homeward Freephone Helpline: 1800 22 1800.** Nutricia Homeward will arrange collection of your pump and any charges related to the return of your pump will be paid for by Nutricia Homeward.

Do I still need to look after my mouth when they are tube feeding?

You have recently started feeding via a tube, which means that your mouth won't be used as often for eating and drinking. However, it is still important to care of your mouth to prevent infections.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can I have baths, showers or swim?

For about 2-3 weeks after you've had the PEG or jejunostomy placed you should only take showers to give the stoma site a chance to heal. Thereafter, taking a bath, or even swimming, is possible as long as your tube is well protected and the wound area has healed and is healthy. You can protect the tube with a waterproof wound dressing. You should, however, avoid sources of poor quality water when swimming. **If you're unsure, speak to your doctor or dietitian about what's safe and possible for you.**

Will I need the tube forever?

Some people need tube feeding for short periods of time, while others may need them long term. Your doctor/dietitian will discuss the expected length of time you will require a feeding tube. Your progress will be reviewed regularly by your doctor and/or dietitian.

What do I do if the tube feed bottle/packaging leaks?

The materials used to make the tube feed bottles/packaging are sturdy; however, in rare cases there is the possibility they can leak. In general the safest and easiest thing to do is to stop feeding and check the feed and all other equipment. It is safer to discard the tube feed and giving set and start again with a fresh tube feed and giving set.

If I'm feeling better, can I stop tube feeding?

The objective of tube feeding is to provide the right amount of energy, protein and nutrients your body needs which may support your recovery. Tube feeding should be continued until you can receive all the nutrients required by mouth. Therefore always discuss with your healthcare professional before you stop tube feeding, or alter anything in your dosage or routine.

Can I put my own food down the tube?

It is not recommended to put anything else other than the prescribed feed, water and medications through the tube. This can lead to tube blockages or the need for tube replacement and can potentially cause infections due to contamination.



Nutricia Homeward

We support you every step of the way

Nutricia Homeward Freephone:
1800 22 1800



Scan here to visit our
tubefeeding patient hub

Nutricia Ireland Ltd,
Block 1, Deansgrange Business Park,
Deansgrange, Co. Dublin.

For further information please visit:
nutriciafocare.com or nutricia.ie

Date of publication: February 2025
CL3177

