

# The Basics of G-Tube Feedings at Home

## How to manage G-tube feedings:

### 1. Prepare

- **Prepare** the formula.
- **Check** the tube position (ask your healthcare provider how often).
- **Flush** the feeding tube with prescribed amount of water.

### 2. Deliver



#### For Gravity Feedings

- **Hang** the feeding container about 2 feet above and to the side of your feeding tube.
- **Remove** cover from the end of the feeding set.
- **Prime** the feeding set. Let formula flow until it comes out the end of the tube.
- **Choose** a safe, comfortable position (sitting up in a chair, propped up in a bed or on a couch).
- **Insert** tip of feeding set into the tube.
- Slowly **open** clamp on the tubing.
- **Set** the flow to your Feeding Plan.
- **Use** the clamp to control the flow until you achieve your desired rate.
- When feeding is complete, **close** the clamp.
- If your healthcare provider has told you to take extra water after feedings:
  - **Pour** the prescribed amount into the feeding container.
  - **Slowly** open the clamp on the tubing.
  - Use the clamp to control the flow until you achieve your desired rate.
  - When water is gone, close the clamp on the feeding set and disconnect the set tubing from the feeding tube.



#### For Syringe Feedings

- **Find** a comfortable place in your home for feedings.
- **Choose** a safe, comfortable position (sitting up in a chair, propped up in bed, or half-sitting on a couch).
- **Flush** the feeding tube with prescribed amount of water.
- For **Drip Method**, remove the plunger from the syringe.
- For **Push Method**, draw formula into syringe by pulling back on plunger.
- **Place** syringe tip into the feeding tube.
- **Hold** the syringe above your stomach.
- **Pour** measured formula into the syringe.
- For **Drip Method**, allow the formula to flow into the feeding tube until gone.
- For **Push Method**, slowly inject formula into the feeding tube using the plunger of the syringe.
- If your healthcare provider has told you to take extra water after feedings:
  - For **Push Method**:
    - Draw prescribed amount of water into the syringe by pulling back on the plunger.
    - **Place** tip of the syringe into the feeding tube and slowly inject water using the plunger of the syringe.
  - For **Drip Method**:
    - Remove plunger from the syringe, and place tip of syringe into the feeding tube.
    - Slowly pour the prescribed amount of water into the syringe and allow it to flow into the feeding tube until it is gone.

## There are three methods for delivering a G-tube feeding:



#### Gravity feeding

- Formula is placed in a container suspended above you and flows down through the tube.
- A clamp on the feeding set and the height of the bag control the feeding rate.



#### Syringe (bolus) feeding

- Formula is placed in a syringe and flows slowly into the feeding tube; the height of the syringe controls the feeding rate.
- In push syringe feeding, the formula can be injected gently into the tube.
- Refer to manufacturer's instructions.



#### Pump feeding

- Formula is fed directly from ready-to-feed container or poured into a feeding container.

### 3. Check tube placement:

- If your G-tube is kept in place with a skin disk, make sure it is not tight against the skin.
- Check its position using the markings on the tube.
- If the tube has moved or has come out, do not use it. Go to the emergency room and take the tube with you.

### 4. Call your doctor or nurse if you experience:

- Vomiting
- Blood in or around the feeding tube
- Formula or stomach contents leaking around the tube site
- Red, sore, or swollen tube site
- Tube clog that you can't flush out with warm water
- Unusual, excessive, or foul-smelling drainage from the tube site (stoma)

## Emotionally Adjusting to Tube Feeding:

Getting used to your feeding tube will take time, but it's important to remember that you can still do many of the things you've always enjoyed. With time and patience, tube feeding can become an ordinary part of your day, like reading the paper or getting the mail.



Visit [www.Oley.org](http://www.Oley.org) to read inspiring stories about people who have successfully integrated tube feeding into their lives.

### Additional comments

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Call **1-800-776-OLEY** or visit **[www.Oley.org](http://www.Oley.org)** for more information about tube feeding.