Managing Issues While Tube Feeding at Home

What you can do to manage symptoms

1. Diarrhea
   - Wait 30 to 60 minutes for the cramps or fullness to subside before starting a feeding.
   - Feed formula more slowly.
   - Administer only the prescribed volume of formula.
   - Allow formula to reach room temperature prior to feeding.

2. Dehydration
   - Talk to your healthcare professional about getting extra water after or between feedings.
   - Ask your healthcare provider if you should change your feeding schedule or formula.

3. Constipation
   - Add more fluids and use the bathroom as soon as you feel the need to go.
   - Exercise and be as active as possible.
   - Record the times of your bowel movements and try to establish a daily routine.
   - Talk to your healthcare provider about whether you should change your medications.

What you should know about your body adjusting to tube feeding:

- It may take time for your gastrointestinal system to get use to tube feeding at home. Be patient.
- Sometimes, conditions like constipation, dehydration or diarrhea can prevent you from getting proper nutrition while tube feeding.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse if you are experiencing symptoms. Ask for information on Vital®, a tube-feeding formula designed to help manage symptoms of gastrointestinal intolerance.
4. Recognize signs and symptoms associated with intolerance or dehydration:
   - Stomach cramps
   - Feeling of fullness and/or discomfort
   - Increased thirst
   - Dry lips
   - Small amounts of dark, strong-smelling urine
   - Hard stools that are difficult to pass
   - Loss of appetite

5. Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have:
   - Upset stomach that lasts 24 hours
   - Signs of dehydration, including increased thirst or dry lips
   - Unusual weakness
   - Red, sore or swollen tube site
   - Tube clog that you can’t flush out with warm water
   - Weight loss or gain of more than 2 pounds a week
   - Vomiting
   - Fever

Additional comments

Call 1-800-776-OLEY or visit www.Oley.org for more information about tube feeding.