

## PATIENT GUIDE

# Your Tube Feeding Schedule

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Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Formula: You will need \_\_\_\_\_ cartons of \_\_\_\_\_ daily.
- Suggested feeding times (may vary per patient preference)

**\*Note:** Feedings should be given over 15-20 minutes, the same duration as a meal.

### Starting your Tube Feeding Schedule:

#### Days 1 & 2:

Start with 1-2 cartons of formula per day and gradually work your way up to the full amount over the next 2-3 days. If you cannot tolerate the full amount of feedings by the end of the first week, contact the dietitian.

Flush tube with at least \_\_\_\_\_ mL (\_\_\_\_\_ oz.) water before and after each feeding.

Additional water throughout the day: \_\_\_\_\_ mL

**\*Note:** even if you are not using your PEG tube yet for formula, you must flush it with 4 oz. of water at least once daily to keep it clear and prevent infection.

### Tips to Remember:

- You may rinse syringes with mild soap and warm water for reuse.
- Opened cans of formula may be covered and stored in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours. If using refrigerated formula, let it sit out at room temperature for 20 minutes to warm up.
- Dispose of any unused open formula after 24 hours.
- Make sure to sit upright during feeding and for at least 30 minutes after feeding to prevent reflux or choking.
- On hot days, or if increasing your physical activity, you may require additional water flushes as needed to avoid dehydration. Signs of dehydration include dry mouth, decreased urination, and dark yellow urine.
- Be sure to clean your PEG tube with mild soap and warm water each day.
- Do not hesitate to contact the dietitian with any questions or concerns. You may also have a separate home care dietitian that you can contact for support.

- \*Remember to keep eating and drinking by mouth as much as possible to exercise your swallow reflux. Note: Do not eat or drink if your doctor has instructed you not to.\*
- Tip: If you dislike the smell of the formula, wear a mask and dab peppermint oil or other essential oil on the inside of the mask.
- Medications: If you are on a medication that requires it to be taken on an empty stomach, be sure to take the medication 30-60 minutes before administering your feed. Consult with your pharmacist with any questions.

## Problems & Solutions

### **STOMACH UPSET**

An uncomfortable feeling of nausea, bloating or gas pain may sometimes result from home tube feedings. Occasionally, belching or vomiting can also occur.

Probable Causes:

- Formula is being fed too fast
- Formula is too cold
- Formula is left open at room temperature or in feeding bag for too long
- Formula is too concentrated
- Too much formula given in a short amount of time
- Lying flat during or immediately after receiving your feeding
- Constipation
- Medication side effect
- Exercising or engaging in too much activity right after a feeding
- Intolerance to the formula

Important Guidelines:

- Remove the formula from the refrigerator at least 30 minutes prior to the feeding, allowing it to warm to room temperature.
- Make sure you are following the directions for the prescribed amount of formula and/or correct flow rate.
- Do not allow formula to sit at room temperature or hang longer than the recommended time.
- Do not lie flat during or just after a feeding. Sit or lie at a 30-degree angle (about the height of two pillows) during the feeding and for 30 to 60 minutes after the feeding.

### **DIARRHEA**

Diarrhea—frequent loose and watery stools—can sometimes occur on a home tube feeding program.

Probable Causes:

- Medication side effects
- Formula is too cold
- Feeding pump rate is too high
- No fiber, or not enough fiber, in your formula
- Formula is being fed too fast by syringe or gravity feeding
- Formula may be spoiled or contaminated by bacteria
- Formula intolerance

Important Guidelines:

- Because emotions can affect digestion, try to relax during the feeding.
- Remove the formula from the refrigerator at least 30 minutes prior to the feeding, allowing it to warm to room temperature.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water and wipe the top of the formula container with a clean wet paper towel before you handle the formula and tubing.
- Unopened formula should be stored in a cool, dry place.
- Opened containers of formula should be re-closed or tightly covered and stored in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.
- Discard formula that has been opened and left in the refrigerator for longer than 24 hours.
- Do not exceed the recommended hang time.
- Replace your feeding container and tubing as directed by your home care provider.

## Questions, Concerns or Problems

Should there be any questions, concerns or problems related to your tube feeding, contact your doctor or you can reach out to Upstate HomeCare's Enteral specialists at **877.286.0800 x6058**.