

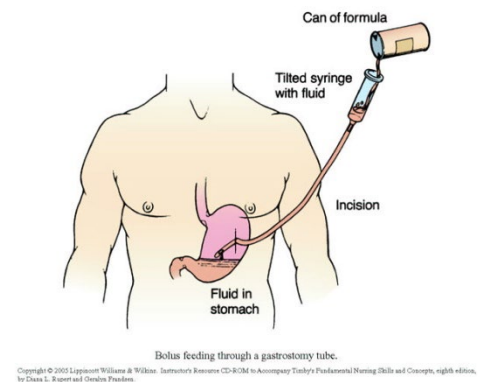
Administering Your Bolus Enteral Feedings

Introduction

Your home care nurse will give you detailed instructions on how to administer your enteral formula. This teaching sheet is intended to provide “reminders”, and should be used in addition to detailed demonstration and instruction.

Key Points about Your Enteral Feedings

- Your enteral formula will be delivered on a regular basis. Be prepared to tell pharmacy staff how much formula (number of containers or cases) you have left when they call for a “supply check” before the next delivery. They may also ask you some questions to determine how you are progressing at home. Please remember to tell them if you have been admitted to the hospital or if your prescriber has changed the amount or schedule for your feedings.
- Read the instructions left by your nurse on the correct use, dilution, administration, and storage of your formula.
- Always store your formula in a dry location with temperature control. The formula should not get extremely hot or cold, and should not be stored in direct sunlight.
- A container of formula, once opened, must be refrigerated or used immediately. Refrigerated unused portions should be thrown away after 24 hours.
- To prevent complications, always keep your work area clean, and cover all unused portions of containers.
- To prevent complications such as infections, always wash your hands before handling your formula or feeding tube. Your nurse will show you how to properly wash your hands.
- To reduce the risk of infection, make sure to use a syringe that is either brand new or has been thoroughly cleaned with soap and water. A syringe may be washed and reused for one (1) week before it has to be discarded.
- Make sure you are getting the correct amount of water each day. In addition to the enteral formula, you should be getting plain water. Your nurse, pharmacist, or dietitian will instruct you on a water flush schedule, including any additional water to be given aside from the feedings.



- NEVER mix medications or other solutions with your formula unless specifically instructed to do so by your home care nurse or pharmacist. Many medications, especially powder from tablets or capsules, will clog the tube when mixed with formula, or can “curdle” the formula. Never force any solution through the tube. Stop and contact your nurse or pharmacist.
- Always sit or stand up during your feedings. NEVER lie down flat.

Administering the Formula

1. Prepare a clean working area.
2. Assemble your supplies:
 - a. Soap for hand washing
 - b. Correct number of containers of formula
 - c. Water for dilution and/or flushing
 - d. A 60 milliliter (mL) enteral syringe
3. Wash your hands as instructed by your nurse
4. Sit comfortably. Open the feeding tube tip and insert/attach the enteral syringe.
5. Pre-flush your feeding tube with _____ mL of water.
6. Remove the piston from the enteral syringe.
7. Shake the formula and wipe off the top of the container with a clean damp paper towel. Check the expiration date on the container. Slowly pour in the prescribed amount of formula into the catheter. Slowly raise and lower the level of the syringe to control the rate.
8. Post flush the feeding tube with _____ mL of water in the enteral syringe.
9. Sit or stand/walk for one (1) hour after the feeding has ended.

Supplemental Water

Give the following amount of additional water each day as instructed below:

When to Call Your Nurse or Pharmacist

Please report any of the following signs or symptoms immediately:

- Cramping, nausea, or vomiting during or after feeding
- Inability to verify placement of the feeding tube
- Excessive diarrhea
- Constipation
- Coughing or difficulty breathing during or after feeding
- Clogging of the tube that does not clear with warm water
- Unusual sense of thirst, dry itchy skin, dark urine, dry mouth

Notes and Instructions