**Jejunostomy Tube Feeding**

A jejunostomy tube (j-tube) enters through your abdomen into your small intestine. This tube is used for tube feeding formula, water, and medicine (instead of taking them by mouth). Tube feeding formula is a liquid source of nutrition that provides calories, protein, water, vitamins and minerals. Your tube feeding formula will be given through a feeding pump. Tube feedings are started in the hospital and require follow-up with a registered dietitian after discharge.

**My Tube Feed and Hydration Plan**

**Tube Feeding Formula**

__________________________________________________________

**Amount of Tube Feed Formula Needed Daily**

You need a total of _____ cans or _____ ounces or _____ milliliters (mL) per day.

**Tube Feed Schedule**

For continuous tube feeds, set your pump to a rate of ______ mL per hour.

For cycled tube feeds, follow the schedule below. A cycled tube feed shortens the time of a feeding by increasing the rate. Increase every _____ days or as instructed by your healthcare provider.

_____ mL per hour for _____ hours
_____ mL per hour for _____ hours
_____ mL per hour for _____ hours

**Additional Water Flushes Needed**

You need a total of ________ mL of water per day to stay hydrated (equal to ____ fluid ounces and ____ cups).

Your goal tube feeds provide ________ mL of water per day.

In addition to goal tube feeds, you need _____ mL of water per day (equal to ____ fluid ounces and ____ cups).

**Water Flush Schedule**

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

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Continuous or Cycled Tube Feeds by Pump

1. Wash your hands with soap and water. Dry them with a clean towel.
2. Use room temperature formula. Very cold formula may cause stomach discomfort.
3. Preparing the feeding: You will either use a ready-made formula or one that requires at home preparation from powder.
   A. Ready-made:
      - If using a ready-made formula, wash the lid of the can and dry the lid with a clean towel.
      - Only open containers of formula that you will need for the feeding.
      - Shake the can(s) before opening.
      - Only place 8 hours’ worth of formula into the bag.
      - Leftover formula that is open can be stored in the refrigerator with a cover.
      - Discard formula that has been open for more than 24 hours.
   B. Prepared formulas from powder:
      - Follow the mixing instructions for preparation given by your healthcare provider.
      - Only place 4 hours’ worth of formula into the bag.
      - Leftover formula that is open can be stored in the refrigerator with a cover.
      - Discard formula that has been prepared more than 24 hours ago.
4. Pour the formula into the feeding bag.
5. Open the cap on the feeding tube and using a syringe, insert at least 30 mL of warm water into your tube or as instructed by your healthcare provider.
6. Remove the syringe and put the tubing from the pump into your feeding tube. Start the pump at the prescribed rate.
7. Keep your head elevated at least 30 degrees while you receive a feeding.
8. To prevent clogging, flush the tube with 30 mL water every 4 hours while the tube feeding is running or as instructed by your healthcare provider.
9. When the feeding is complete, disconnect the bag. Flush your feeding tube with 30 mL of warm water or as instructed by your healthcare provider and cap the tube to prevent leaking.
10. Rinse the feeding bag and tubing with water and then swish with warm water and a small amount of liquid dishwashing detergent. Rinse and allow to air dry. Change out the tube feeding bag every 3 days.
11. Clean the syringe with warm, soapy water and allow to air dry completely between feedings. Change the syringe each week.
12. To allow you more freedom, there are special backpacks you can get for feeding pumps. Check with your medical supplier about this option.

Water Flushes
Your body needs enough fluid to stay hydrated. The tube feed formula will provide some fluids. The rest of your fluid will be met by oral intake (if safe) and/or by doing water flushes through your feeding tube. You may not be getting enough fluid if you have: dizziness, dry mouth, dry lips, lower urine output than normal and dark urine.
Medicine
You can give medicine through the feeding tube if you are unable to swallow them. Follow these instructions:

1. Do not add medicine directly to the formula.
2. Give each medicine one at a time; do not mix together.
3. Flush the tube with 30 mL water before giving a medicine or as instructed by your healthcare provider. If giving more than one medicine at one time, flush in between each dose with 10 mL water.
4. Crush and dissolve pills in at least 30 mL water prior to flushing them through the tube. Never crush enteric-coated or time-release capsules.
5. Flush the tube again with 30 mL water after administering the medicine, or as instructed by your healthcare provider.

Call Your Doctor If…
- Your tube may clog sometimes. Medicines may cause clogs or it may clog if you are not flushing your tube with water often enough. This is not an emergency. First try to flush the tube with 30 mL of warm water. Never force fluid into the tube. If this does not unclog the tube, call your doctor. If your tube clogs at night you can wait until morning to call.
- If your tube falls out, call your doctor right away. Although this is not harmful to you, replacing the tube becomes more difficult the longer the tube is out.
- Weigh yourself 3 times a week at the same time of day on the same scale. Early morning is best, after urinating. Keep a record of your weight. If you notice weight gain or loss of more than 2-3 pounds per week contact your doctor, nurse or registered dietitian.
- Nausea or upset stomach for more than 24 hours.
- Diarrhea (3 or more loose, watery bowel movements) for more than 2 days.
- Constipation (lack of bowel movement) for more than 5 days.
- Anything that causes you to stop giving tube feedings for more than one day.

Teach Back
What is the name of the formula being prescribed for your tube feeds?
How many cans of formula do you need each day?
When do you need to flush your tube with water?

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition.

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children’s Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: (608) 890-5500.

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at: (608) 287-2770.

The Spanish version of this Health Facts for You is #296s