

NTSAD Care Tips



G-Tubes from A to Z

The first of a series of videos to help families understand different topics that may arise in caring for their child.

This series is meant for informational purposes only. It is not medical advice. Please consult your physician.

What is a G-tube?

- The purpose of a g-tube is to administer food, fluids, medication and to decrease the chance of aspiration.
- Silicone and flexible tube that is surgically placed directly into the stomach through the stomach wall.
- An inflatable balloon keeps the tube in place and can be changed comfortably at home.

What is a G-J tube?

- It has two ports. One goes into stomach for the big feeds and medications, if tolerated, and the other into the jejunum to deliver a slower rate of food. Jejunal feedings require a continuous delivery of formula via a feeding pump.
- It is a feeding tube that allows feedings to bypass the stomach by directly entering the jejunum - the upper portion of the intestines.
- The purpose of a G-J tube is to eliminate feedings as a source of reflux.
- The G-J tube must be changed by a doctor in a hospital at least every 3-4 months.

Using a G-tube

- The parts along with the placed tube to administer feedings and medication are:
 - The feeding pump bag
 - Extension tube
 - The feeding pump which is set to a rate that is safe to deliver food.
- Bolus feeding is a type of feeding method using a syringe to deliver formula through your feeding tube. It may also be called syringe or gravity feeding because holding up the syringe allows formula to flow down using gravity.
- Review of how to prime the tube to get air out of the tube before feedings along with an explanation of how to burp through the tube and essentially “throw up” without aspiration (food or liquid going directly into lungs)
- What is a Nissen fundoplication?
 - It is a surgical procedure to tighten the esophageal sphincter to prevent food from going out of stomach into esophagus
 - Without it, child should be propped up while feeding

Food and Medication

- Can be regular food that is blended to a consistency that can go through a G-tube.
- Food can get clogged into the connector before it even reaches the tube.
- Medication, liquid and water can be delivered through the G-tube as well.

Benefits & Hydration

- Prime tube with water before a bolus feeding, which is perfect for water, medication or snack.
- Feeds using a tube can free up time for more fun and enjoyable activities – often the struggle to feed by mouth can be long and frustrating for the child and caregiver.
- It doesn't mean a child cannot “taste” by mouth.

G-tube Care

- Easy to care for the g-tube site
- No need to cover redness - be sure the area is dry
- Pads could damage tissue at the G-tube site – the surgeon gauges the length of the tube to allow for movement and the pads can restrict the tube which can lead to irritation
- Recommended to change every three months

Making the Decision

- Hydration
- Nutrition
- Medication
- Reduces the risk of aspiration which can lead to complications.

For more resources:

Courageous Parents Network

www.courageousparentsnetwork.org

NTSAD Family Support

www.NTSAD.org



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