

Personal Care



It's always important to maintain good oral health.

The following steps are recommended to help keep your mouth as clean as possible.

Follow any other special instructions from your healthcare professionals.

Mouth

Brush teeth, gums and tongue at least two times a day using toothpaste and a soft toothbrush.

To moisten mouth, if allowed, use ice chips, hard candies, or chewing gum.

Freshen mouth and breath by using mouthwash.

To moisten lips, use lip balm or lanolin based moisturizing cream.

To prevent chapping, avoid licking lips.

Report bleeding or anything unusual to your healthcare professional.

If you have a nasogastric or nasointestinal tube, it is important to take care of your nose as the tube may cause mild soreness or mucus in your nostrils.

Nose

On a daily basis, change tape holding feeding tube in place. When re-taping, allow some slack so the tube does not rub against nostrils.

Clean nostrils at least once a day with a soft washcloth or cotton swabs moistened with warm water.

Remove sticky tape residue with a special adhesive remover.

Remove crusting on nostrils with warm water or hydrogen peroxide on a cotton swab.

Report any redness, bleeding, numbness or anything unusual to your healthcare professional.

Tube Site

If you have a gastrostomy or jejunostomy tube, care of the skin surrounding the feeding site is very important.

Wash hands thoroughly.

Remove old dressing and tape, being careful not to disturb the tube.

Cleanse the skin around the tube daily with soap and water as directed by your healthcare professional.

To remove any crusting around the tube site, use cotton swabs moistened with hydrogen peroxide.

Check the tube site every day for signs of redness, soreness, swelling, or unusual drainage.

Report anything unusual to your healthcare professional.

Dry the skin around the feeding tube site thoroughly. Healed gastrostomy or jejunostomy sites usually do not need a special dressing. If a dressing is required, follow the instructions from your healthcare professional.

Making your home tube feeding a pleasant experience

The transition to home tube feeding requires some adjustments and there are ways to make them easier. For example, talking to friends and family about your tube feeding may make you more comfortable with the transition. Or, consider scheduling your feedings during family meal time. If you choose to administer your feedings at other times, be sure to continue to engage in family and other social activities. The adjustment may require time and patience, but soon it will become a routine.

Tube Feeding Resources

The following resources provide additional information regarding home tube feeding:

■ **Oley Foundation**

The Oley Foundation is a national, non-profit organization that provides information and emotional support to individuals and caregivers receiving tube feeding.

www.oley.org

■ **CaringBridge**

CaringBridge provides websites that connect people experiencing a major health issue to family and friends making the health journey easier.

www.caringbridge.org

■ **Tube Feeding Awareness**

A group of parents who are raising infants and children with feeding tubes who want to share their experiences along the way in addition to raising awareness of tube feeding. www.feedingtubewebawareness.com

■ **ParENTalk™**

This website provides resources and support, including instructional videos, for parents caring for a tube fed child. www.parentalk.com

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This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for medical advice.