

What to Expect When You Are Having A Feeding Tube Inserted as an Inpatient



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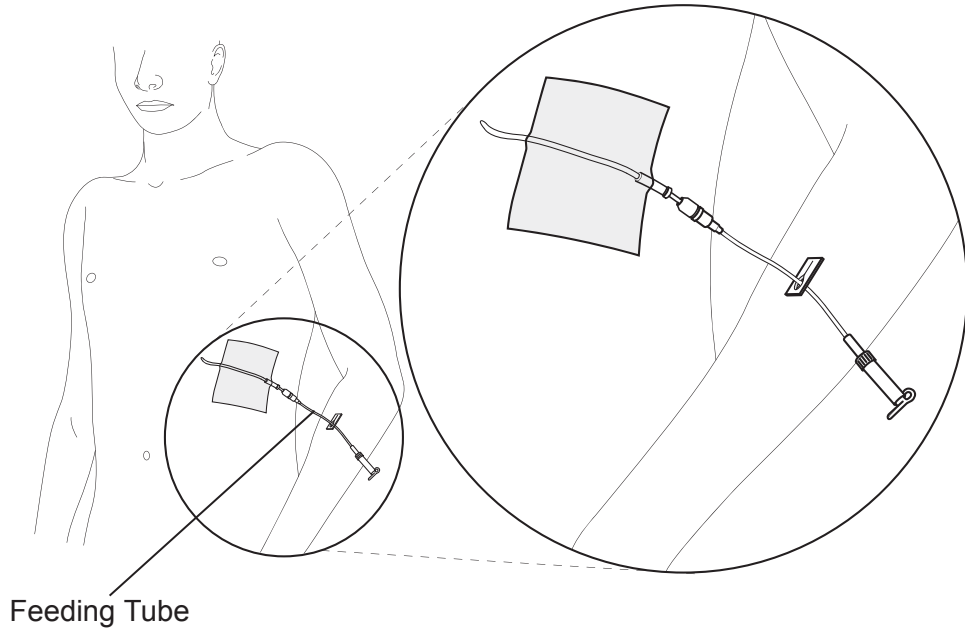
This pamphlet is for patients who are staying in the hospital when they have their feeding tube inserted. You may be admitted to the hospital the night before or on the same day that you are having the feeding tube inserted.

This pamphlet explains:

- What to expect at the hospital on the day of the procedure
- What you need to bring
- Instructions for the day of the tube insertion procedure
- What to expect after the procedure

What is a feeding tube?

A feeding tube is a rubber or plastic tube that is put into your stomach or your jejunum (a part of your small bowel that comes after your stomach) and comes out of your abdomen (belly area) on the outside of your body. You will use this tube to feed yourself so that you get the right amount of water and nutrients.



Why do I need a feeding tube?

If you are getting chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy to the head and neck area you may have side effects from the treatment. You and your doctor have agreed that you need a feeding tube to help you deal with some of these side effects such as:

- Mouth pain
- Trouble swallowing
- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)

These side effects can make it hard for you to get the water and nutrition you need to keep your body strong during your treatment.

If you can't eat and drink enough you may be at risk for malnutrition and dehydration, which means that you are not getting enough nutrients and water.. Your feeding tube can be used to give you feeding formula, water and medications.

A step-by-step guide to getting your feeding tube inserted.

Step 1: The night before your feeding tube is inserted

Date: _____ (write the date in here)

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your feeding tube is put in.
- If your mouth is dry you may rinse with water and spit it out.
- Take your medications as usual the night before your appointment.

Step 2: The morning before your feeding tube is inserted (for patients being admitted to the hospital on the same day of their tube insertion).

When: Arrive by 9:00 am on the day of your appointment

Where: Go to the ward your care team has told you to go to.
This is usually ward 17A or 17B (17th floor), and sometimes 18B (18th floor).

- Do not take any medications the morning before your feeding tube is put in.
- You can take your morning medications later that day. Your nurse will tell you when it is OK to take your pills and will give you any medications your doctors order.

What to bring to the hospital

- All of your medications
- Your hospital blue card
- Any items you may need to be comfortable for an overnight stay (change of clothes, iPod, toothbrush, etc.)

Step 3: The Feeding Tube insertion procedure (35-40 minutes)

The tube is inserted in the Department of Interventional Radiology at Toronto General Hospital (across the street from PMH). You will be taken there on a stretcher by hospital staff.

Before your feeding tube is inserted, a temporary IV will be placed in a vein in your forearm so you won't have to get needles. This may be done the night before if you are staying in the hospital. Through the IV you will get:

- A sedative (medication to help you relax)
- Pain medication so that you are not in pain
- Fluids to prevent you from getting dehydrated

You may need to have a small area of your abdomen shaved.

The Procedure:

1. Your abdomen will be numbed with local anesthesia so that you don't feel anything during the procedure. You will be awake during the procedure but very drowsy from the sedative.
2. A tube will be passed through your nose into your stomach; this tube is used to fill your stomach with air. This helps the doctor find the correct place to position the feeding tube.
3. Using X-ray guidance, a needle is inserted through the skin into the stomach.
4. A guide-wire is placed and the feeding tube is put in over the guide-wire.

It is normal to feel some pressure during the procedure. Some people have stomach discomfort after the tube is placed because of the air that was put into the stomach during the procedure. This air will slowly leave the stomach and the discomfort should go away.

The entire procedure takes about 30-45 minutes.

Step 4: After the tube is inserted.

After your feeding tube is put in, hospital staff will take you back to your room in Princess Margaret Hospital by stretcher, through a tunnel connecting the hospitals.

When you return, nurses will watch over you by checking your vital signs and checking the tube in your abdomen.

Fluids:

You will receive fluids through your IV so that you don't get dehydrated while you rest after the procedure.

Pain and nausea:

You will receive medicine through the IV to control any pain and nausea you have after the feeding tube is inserted. It is normal to experience some pain in your abdomen after the feeding tube is inserted. Tell your nurse if you have any pain.

Step 5: The day after your Feeding Tube is inserted

You will learn how to take care of your feeding tube and how to feed yourself. In the morning, your nurse will show you how to flush your feeding tube with water and how to use your feeding tube to give yourself a can of formula.

Your first feeding

Your nurse will teach you how to set up and give yourself the formula and to make sure you can do the feeding yourself. You will get your first feeding formula through your feeding tube in the hospital to make sure that the formula does not upset your stomach.

You will be given written information about how to use and care for your feeding tube.

If you are staying at the hospital for only one night for the feeding tube insertion, you can go home the next day after you have learned how to use the feeding tube and are able to properly flush your tube and give yourself the formula.

Important Phone Numbers

Princess Margaret Hospital switchboard

416-946-4501

Radiation Nursing Clinic

416-946-4501 Ext. 6558 (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday)

Nursing Supervisor

416-946-4501 Ext. 5134 (evenings, weekends and holidays)

Nurse Practitioner

416-946-4501 Ext. 3610