

What to Expect When You Are Having a Feeding Tube Inserted as an Outpatient



PMH

This pamphlet is for patients who will have a Feeding Tube inserted at the hospital and will go home the same day.

It will explain:

- 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

Key Points to remember for safety!

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the night before your appointment.
- Do not take your medications on the morning that your feeding tube is being inserted.
- Arrange for somebody to pick you up or go home with you on the same day of your appointment. You will not be able to drive.
- Your feeding tube will need to be flushed twice a day to make sure it is working properly. You will learn how to flush your feeding tube before you leave the hospital.



This information is to be used for informational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please consult your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition. A single copy of these materials may be reprinted for non-commercial personal use only.

© 2011 University Health Network. All rights reserved.

Author: James Smith and Jennifer Deering

Created: 05/2011

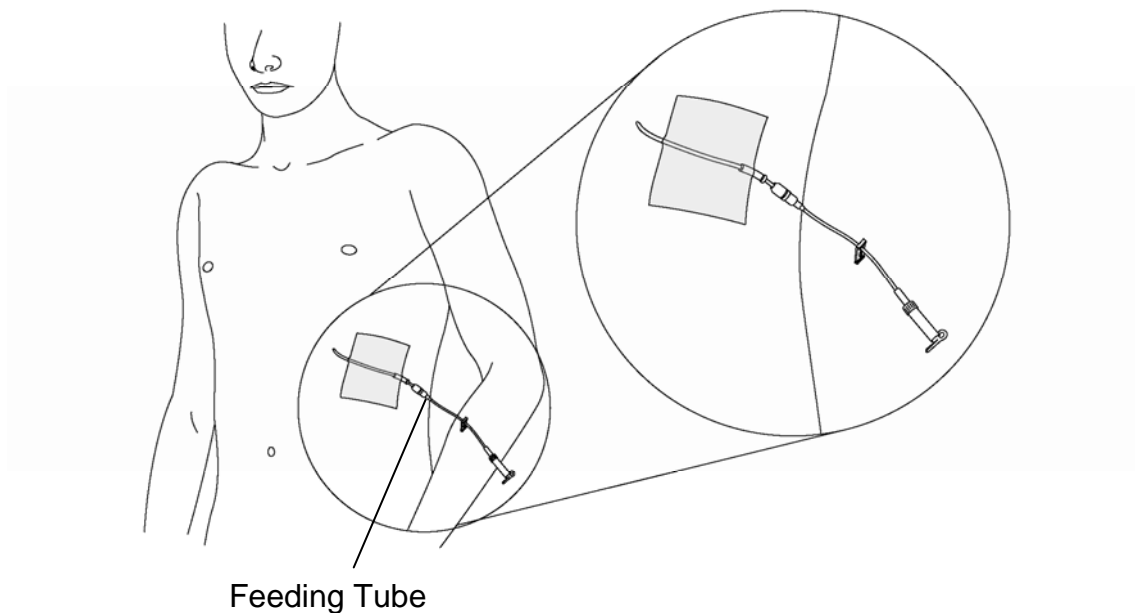
Form: D-5746



University Health Network
Toronto General Hospital Toronto Western Hospital Princess Margaret Hospital

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 of 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 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.

Patients who can't eat and drink enough are also at risk for malnutrition (not getting enough nutrients) and dehydration (not getting enough water). Your feeding tube can be used to give you water and medications as well as the feeding formula.

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

Step 1: Appointment with your nurse _____ (write the date in here)

When: On the Friday before your feeding tube is to be inserted

Where: Princess Margaret Hospital, Room 17-117 in 17B on the 17th floor
or in the Radiation Nursing Clinic on level 2B

Feel free to bring a family member or friend with you.

This appointment is very important! If you cannot make it please call 416-946-4501 ext. 3610 to arrange another date/time when you can come.

At this appointment:

- The nurse will go over what you need to know before your feeding tube is inserted.
- The nurse will give you an information booklet.
- The nurse will go over the booklet with you. The booklet will give you more information about the procedure.
- The nurse will answer any questions you have.

Step 2: The night before your feeding tube procedure _____ (write the date here)

- You must not eat or drink anything after midnight on 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 3: The morning of your feeding tube procedure _____ (write the date here)



Important note about medications

- Do not take any medications in the morning before your feeding tube is put in.
- Take your morning medications later that day after a nurse tells you it is OK to take your pills.

What to bring to the hospital

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

Step 4: Arriving at your appointment: 7:45 a.m. _____ (write the date here)

When: 7:45 a.m. on the day of your scheduled appointment

Where: Toronto General Hospital, Department of Medical Imaging

Directions: The Robert E. McEwan entrance for Toronto General is the closest entrance to the Medical Imaging Department. It is located directly across the street from Princess Margaret Hospital, on University Avenue.

The Medical Imaging Department is on the first floor of the West Wing next to Tim Hortons. **Please ask the information desk for directions when you enter the hospital.**

Once you arrive, please tell the Medical Imaging receptionist that you are here to have a feeding tube inserted as an outpatient. The receptionist will help you get to the Interventional Radiology area where the tube insertion procedure will happen.

Step 5: The Feeding Tube insertion procedure (35 to 40 minutes)

Before your feeding tube is inserted a temporary IV will be placed in a vein in your forearm so you will not have to get needles.

Through the IV you will get:

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

The Procedure:

1. A small area of your abdomen will be numbed with local anesthesia so that you don't feel anything during the procedure.

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.

Some people have stomach discomfort after the tube is placed. This is usually because of the air that was put into the stomach during the procedure. This air will leave the stomach and the discomfort should go away.

The entire procedure takes about 30 to 45 minutes.

Remember:

- You may need to have a small area of your abdomen shaved.
- You will be awake during the procedure but very drowsy from the sedative.
- It is normal to feel some pressure during the procedure.

Step 6: After the tube is inserted.

After your feeding tube is put in a porter will take you by stretcher to Princess Margaret Hospital's Radiation Nursing Clinic (RNC) on level 2B, through a tunnel connecting the hospitals.

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

Fluids:

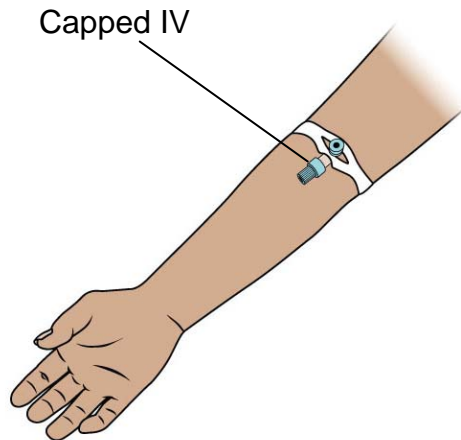
Your nurses will give you fluids through your IV so that you don't get dehydrated while you rest after the procedure

Pain and Nausea:

Your nurses will also give you 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 7: Getting ready to go home

You will be sent home with the IV in place and capped in case you need more fluids intravenously the next day.



Eating and Drinking:

Before you can go home you will be seen by either a Nurse Practitioner or a Doctor who will let you know what liquids you can drink that evening and overnight. You should be able to eat solid foods again the next morning.

Medications:

You will be given a prescription for medicine to control pain and nausea to take at home, depending on how you feel. This prescription can be filled at your local pharmacy or at the PMH outpatient pharmacy on the first floor.

Flushing your Tube:

You will be shown how to 'flush' your tube with water using a syringe. You may be asked to flush your tube at home on the first night.

Flushing the tube is important to prevent it from becoming blocked. Even if you are not using the tube for formula it needs to be flushed with a syringe of water twice a day.

Step 8: Going home: 5:00 p.m.

It is possible that you will need to stay in the hospital overnight after you get your feeding tube but most patients are able to go home the same day.

You can go home with a family member or friend by **5:00 p.m.** on the same day you get your feeding tube. Please arrange to have someone to give you a ride home because the

medications that you will receive during the day will make you drowsy and you will not be able to drive or go home alone.

If you are staying at the PMH Lodge you do not need a family member or friend to accompany you home. You can take the shuttle bus back to the Lodge.

You will be given some instructions from a nurse when you are leaving. Please make sure you understand them and ask questions if you don't.

It is important to your safety that you follow these instructions.

Step 9: The day after your Feeding Tube is inserted _____
(write the date here)

The next day you will learn how to take care of your feeding tube and how to feed yourself.

In the morning you should return to the Radiation Nursing Clinic, on level 2B, for an assessment. If you are feeling well, it is most likely that you will be told to resume your normal diet and the intravenous catheter will be removed.

It is possible that the nurse practitioner or doctor may want to give you more intravenous fluids based on your check-up and how you feel.

Your first feeding:

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

Step 10: Meeting with a dietitian – the week after your tube is inserted

You will meet with a dietitian within a week after your tube is inserted. The dietitian will:

- check how you are doing nutritionally
- give you advice on which foods you may be able to eat through your mouth
- help you decide on when to start using your feeding tube
- tell you how many cans of formula you will need every day to stay healthy

You will meet the dietitian every week while you have your feeding tube and she will assess how you are doing with your nutrition and fluid needs.

Important Phone Numbers

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, Jenn Deering

416-946-4501 Ext. 3610

Dietitian, Tammy Fansabedian

416-946-4501 Ext. 5266

R.N. Case Manager

416-946-4501 Ext. _____