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## GASTROSTOMY BUTTON: TUBE FEEDING

Your child has a gastrostomy button. This is a small feeding device that has been placed into your child's stomach. The gastrostomy button allows you to give tube feedings through the small opening in your child's stomach.

### DOCTOR'S ORDER

Feed your child \_\_\_\_\_ ounces of formula or tube feeding (as ordered by your doctor) \_\_\_\_\_ times a day.

Pump rate: \_\_\_\_\_

Drip rate: \_\_\_\_\_

### YOU WILL NEED

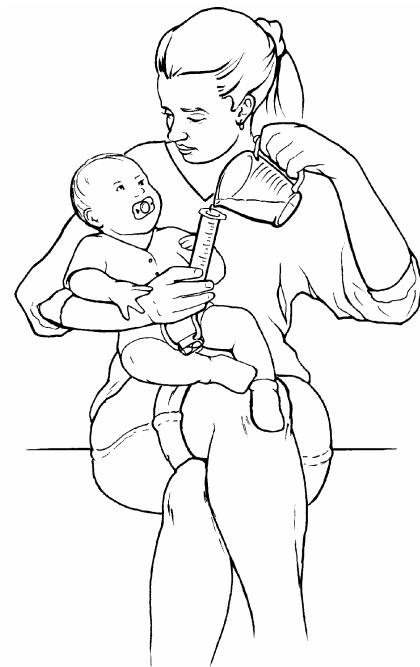
- Gastrostomy button bolus feeding tube
- Gastrostomy button continuous feeding tube
- Catheter tip syringe
- Formula or tube feeding
- Formula bag (for continuous feedings)
- Measuring cup
- Water

### PREPARING TO FEED YOUR CHILD

1. Wash your hands.
2. Measure the formula in the measuring cup.
3. Warm the formula in a pan of warm water so that it is at **at least** room temperature. (Be sure it is only warm and not hot.) *Never warm formula in the microwave oven.*

### FEEDING YOUR CHILD

- When you hold your infant during feedings, keep his head raised (Picture 1). You may place the child in an infant seat, but only if the child's head is raised and the child does not slump forward.
- If your child is older, place him in a chair or bed with the head of the bed raised 6 to 8 inches.
- To prevent choking, **do not feed an infant or older child when he or she is lying down.**



**Picture 1** Feeding your child through the gastrostomy button.

## BOLUS FEEDINGS

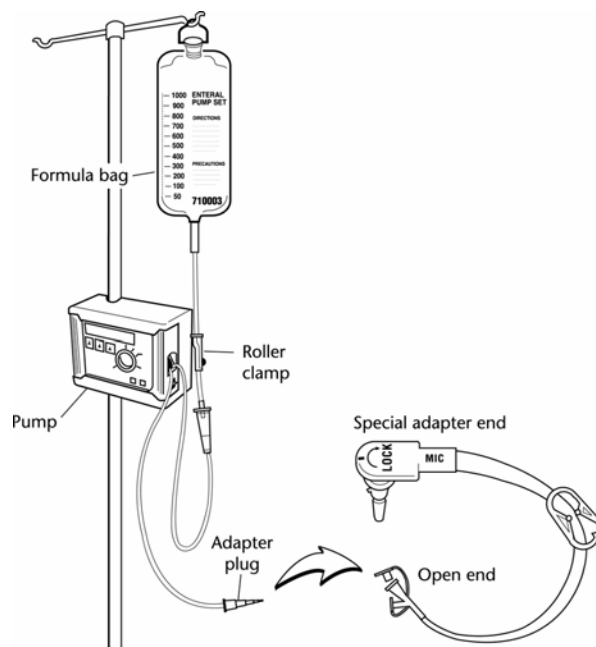
Bolus feeding means feeding the child for 15 to 30 minutes, several times a day.

1. Pour a drop of the formula on the inside of your wrist to test the temperature. It should be warm, not hot.
2. Clamp the bolus tube.
3. Remove the plunger from the syringe. Attach the wide, open end of the bolus tube to the tip of the syringe.
4. Pour the formula into the syringe.
5. Hold the syringe and tube over a sink or cup. Unclamp the tube and allow the formula to flow through the tube. Then clamp the tube again.
6. Unplug the gastrostomy button and place the adapter end of the bolus tube into the button. This prevents air from entering the child's stomach.
7. Unclamp the bolus tube.
8. Feedings are usually given over 15 to 30 minutes.
9. The syringe should not be held higher than the child's shoulder.
10. Refill the syringe before it is empty to keep air from entering the child's stomach.
11. When the feeding is completed, add 20 to 30 mL (1 ounce) of water to the syringe to rinse the tube and button.
12. Let all the water run into the feeding tube. Then pinch the tube and remove it from the button. (If the child seems to have air in the stomach or is fussy, you can leave the tube open for a few minutes to let air escape.)
13. Replace the gastrostomy button plug.
14. Rinse the bolus tube and syringe under warm running water.

## CONTINUOUS FEEDING

Continuous feeding means giving the feeding over a longer period of time. If you are using a feeding pump for continuous feeding, you will be taught what drip rate to use and how many hours to give the feedings. Some feedings may be given by gravity over 15 to 30 minutes using the continuous feeding tube and formula bag.

1. Pour a drop of the formula on the inside of your wrist to test the temperature. It should be warm, not hot.
2. Attach the open end of the continuous feeding tube to the adapter plug on the formula bag.
3. Clamp the tubing.
4. Pour the formula into the formula bag.
5. Hang the formula bag on a hook or on the pole with the feeding pump (Picture 2).
6. Unclamp the tubing and let the formula fill the entire length of tubing. Clamp the tubing.
7. Open the gastrostomy button plug and place the special adapter on the end of the continuous feeding tube into the gastrostomy button.
8. Adjust the roller to let the formula drip in over the period of time ordered by the doctor. If you are using a feeding pump, set the drip rate on the feeding pump and start the machine.
9. After the formula is gone, add enough water to the formula bag to rinse the entire length of the feeding tube.
10. Let all the water run into the feeding tube. Then pinch the continuous feeding tube and remove it from the button.
11. Replace the gastrostomy button plug.
12. Rinse the continuous feeding tube under warm running water. A new formula bag should be used every 24 hours.



**Picture 2** Continuous feeding tube, formula bag, and feeding pump.

## CLEANING THE EQUIPMENT

- Wash the feeding tubes in warm soapy water after each feeding. Rinse well with clean water and air-dry.
- Once a week, soak the feeding tubes in vinegar for 20 minutes to help remove dried formula or food. Rinse well with plain water before using again.

## OTHER INFORMATION

- Infants may enjoy using a pacifier, especially during the feeding, to satisfy sucking needs.
- Your child or infant should remain in a raised position for at least 30 minutes after feeding. If you put him to bed, place him on his right side. Raise the head of the bed 6 to 8 inches by placing rolled blankets **under** the mattress and behind him (Picture 3).
- If your child cries during the feeding, stop the feeding until your child is quiet and comforted.
- If your child's abdomen becomes distended ("puffed out") during continuous tube feedings, stop the feeding for about one hour. If the stomach remains distended and the child is uncomfortable, use the decompression tube as described in the Helping Hand: *Gastrostomy Button: Daily Care*, HH-II-46. Wait about an hour and restart the continuous feeding at a slightly slower rate. Then call your doctor or clinic for further instructions.
- Leftover formula should be refrigerated and used within 24 hours.
- **Formula should not be left in a continuous feeding bag for more than 8 hours!** It may spoil.
- You may give medicine through a bolus feeding tube. Rinse the button and tube with 20 to 30 mL (1 ounce) of water after the medicine has gone through.
- **Do not use a gastrostomy button "decompression only" tube as a feeding tube! This tube may ruin the one way valve if left in.**
- The skin around the gastrostomy button should be cleaned twice a day with soap. (Refer to the Helping Hand: *Gastrostomy Button: Daily Care*, HH-II-46.)

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse, or call \_\_\_\_\_.



**Picture 3** Raise the head of your child's bed by placing rolled blankets under the mattress.