

Dobhoff Tube Postoperative Care Head and Neck Surgical Oncology

Home Care

Hand Hygiene

When you are discharged home with your Dobhoff tube, it is vitally important to utilize good hand hygiene. Please wash your hands before and after using your feeding tube.

What is a Dobhoff tube?

A Dobhoff tube is a small bore tube that is inserted through the nose, down the throat and esophagus, and into the stomach. It can be used to give medications, liquids, and liquid food. After your surgery, this tube will be used as the way to get nutrition and medication to your intestinal tract until you heal and can swallow safely. This tube is not permanent and will be removed when your Speech Language Pathologist and Surgeon deem it is safe to do so. This tube is normally secured in the nose with sutures or a nasal bridle. The sutures or ties holding the tube in place may make the nose sore but this is normal. It is important for you to learn how to utilize this tube for your nutritional and medication needs so that you can discharge home and feel comfortable using it.

Flushing your Feeding tube

One of the things you must do is flush your tube to prevent it from becoming clogged. You will flush your tube with room temperature water before and after each feeding, and before and after giving yourself any medications. You were shown how to flush and care for your tube in the hospital. These steps are a reminder on how to care for your tube when you are at home.

- *Gather your supplies:*
 - Formula (Room Temperature)
 - Syringe (60 mL)
 - Water (Room Temperature)
- *Follow these steps:*
 - Fill a clean cup or bowl with room temperature water
 - Put the tip of the syringe in the water and draw up _____ mL of water
 - Open the cap on the feeding port and insert the syringe adapter (Blue) so the 60 mL syringe connects with the Dobhoff tube
 - Push down on the plunger slowly. Use an even, gentle push. Let the water run through the tube
 - Remove blue syringe adapter and close the cap

Administering medications through your feeding tube

If you normally take any medications by mouth, you will need to take them through your feeding tube. Before you discharge home, it is important to go through your list of medications and identify which medications can be switched to liquid form.

- *Remember to:*
 - Use liquid medications when possible
 - **Do not** crush or dissolve extended-release or enteric-coated medications unless directed by your doctor
 - **Do not** mix medications with formula
 - Flush your tube before, between, and after giving medications to prevent the tube from getting clogged
- *Gather your supplies:*
 - Water (Room Temperature)
 - Syringe (60 mL)
 - Medications
 - Pill crusher
- *Follow these steps:*
 - Prepare each medication the way you were shown in the hospital
 - Take your medications in the following order:
 - Liquid medications first
 - Medications that need to be dissolved second
 - Thick medications last
 - Uncap Dobhoff tube and insert the syringe adapter (Blue). Make sure to pinch tube so that feeding or gastric juices do not backflow out of the tube
 - Remove the plunger from the syringe and insert 60 mL syringe into the syringe adapter (Blue)
 - Pour _____ mL of room temperature water into the syringe and flush your tube
 - Pour the medication into the syringe. **Do not** use the syringe plunger to push medication into the tube. Let the medication flow slowly.
 - Flush the tube with _____ mL of room temperature water after all medications have been given
 - Pinch tubing and remove syringe adapter (blue)
 - Cap tubing
 - ❖ Some medications do not mix well with the formula. Wait about 30 minutes to 1 hour before you start your feeding after taking medications

Feeding with a Syringe (Bolus)

- *Gather your supplies:*
 - Formula (Room Temperature)
 - Syringe (60 mL)
 - Water (Room Temperature)

Patient Education



- *Follow these steps:*
 - Wipe the top of the formula can or top to ensure that it is clean
 - Shake the formula container well before opening
 - Fill a clean cup or bowl with room temperature water
 - Put the tip of the syringe in the water and draw up _____ mL of water
 - Open the cap on the feeding port and insert the syringe adapter (Blue) so the 60 mL syringe connects with the Dobhoff tube
 - Push down on the plunger slowly. Use an even, gentle push. Let the water run through the tube
 - Pinch tube and disconnect syringe
 - Remove the plunger from the syringe and reconnect the empty syringe to the syringe adapter (Blue)
 - Open top of can of formula and pour into syringe slowly (You don't want to pour too fast to overflow the syringe)
 - You will pour the instructed amount of formula into the syringe slowly and evenly
 - Each feeding should take at least 20-30 minutes or longer. Feeding too quickly could cause nausea, bloating or other gastrointestinal symptoms.
 - Pinch tube to prevent backflow
 - Flush the tube with _____ mL of room temperature water after feeding is complete
 - Pinch tubing and remove syringe adapter (blue)
 - Cap tubing
 - Tell patient: "Each feeding should take at least 20-30 minutes or longer. Feeding too quickly could cause nausea, bloating or other gastrointestinal symptoms."

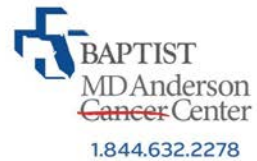
Positioning considerations

- When administering flushes, medications, or formula make sure you are sitting up right or sitting up at least 45 degrees
- Sit or stand up right for about an 1 hour after formula is given
 - You can go for a walk or be up and moving about in that 1 hour timeframe
- This will prevent any formula from refluxing and may reduce nausea

Special Instructions

- Call your doctor immediately if you are having any of the following symptoms:
 - Bloody or coffee-colored drainage through the tube. Depending on the amount of bleeding, your provider may direct you to seek medical care right away
 - Trouble breathing during feeding, flushing, or giving medications
 - Tube that can't be unclogged
 - Tube that is dislodged from the nose
 - Tube that is cracked or breaking down
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Bloating or tight stomach
 - Temperature of 101°F (38.3°C) or higher

Patient Education



- Diarrhea that lasts more than 3 loose stools

Follow-up Care

Return for your follow-up appointment with your surgeon as scheduled.

Emergency Center

In case of any emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency center. *For non-emergencies during business hours, call our triage line at 904-202-7300 option 3.*

Reviewed 4/20/2020

Formula Log

Date	Suggested Times	Amount of Formula	Water Flashes before and after feeding
	_____AM	_____can(s) or _____mL	mL
	_____AM/PM	_____can(s) or _____mL	mL
	_____AM/PM	_____can(s) or _____mL	mL
	_____PM	_____can(s) or _____mL	mL
	_____PM	_____can(s) or _____mL	mL