

# Preventing Tube Site Infection While Tube Feeding at Home

## What you should do to prevent infection:

### 1 Steps to take for proper cleaning



Wash your hands.



Gather the materials you need to clean the tube site: soap, cotton-tipped swabs, wash cloth, towel and warm water.



Wash and clean skin with a cloth, soap and water. Start at the tube and work outward in circles.



Clean under the skin disk or external hub with cotton swab and soap and water.



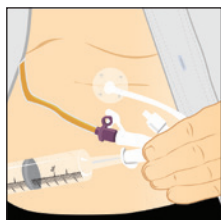
Rinse with warm water and dry completely with towel.

If your doctor or nurse has instructed you to use a dressing, apply it as directed. It is important to change your dressing every day. If it becomes wet or soiled, it should be changed immediately.

### 2 Proper Placement

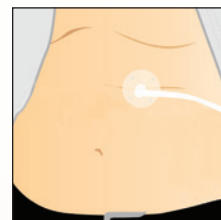
#### For G-Tubes

- If your G-tube is kept in place with a skin disk, make sure it is not tight against the skin and check its position using the markings on the tube.
- Gently turn the tube a full circle by rolling between thumb and index finger.
- The tube should have slight in-and-out play of about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch.



#### For J-Tubes

- Your J-tube skin anchor will be secured with sutures to your skin.
- The J-tube site should be cleaned daily with a clean wash cloth, soap, and water, and the site inspected to make sure that the sutures are intact and that there is no redness or drainage at the insertion site.
- Do not attempt to turn the J-tube or move it in or out.



### Why it's important to practice good care and maintenance of your feeding tube:

- Improper care may lead to infection.
- Infections can cause interruptions in feeding and may keep you from getting the nutrition you need.

### 3 What to do if the feeding tube comes out of place:

- If the feeding tube is partially out of place:
  - Do not use the tube
  - Check to see how much the tube has shifted by comparing its markings to your records
  - Tape the tube to your skin to prevent further movement
  - Call your doctor or nurse as soon as possible
- If the feeding tube is completely out of place:
  - Go to your hospital emergency room
  - Take the feeding tube with you

### 4 Practice good oral hygiene

You might not be able to eat or drink, but good mouth care is still important.

- Brush your teeth, gums and tongue with a toothbrush and a small amount of toothpaste at least twice a day
- If your mouth or lips are dry, ask your healthcare provider to recommend a lip balm or moisturizer.

### 5 Call your doctor or nurse if you experience:

- Unusual weakness
- Blood in or around the feeding tube
- Leaking around the tube site
- Red, sore or swollen
- Inability to flush out your tube clog with warm water
- Unusual, excessive or foul smelling drainage from the stoma

### Emotionally Adjusting to Tube Feeding:

Getting used to your feeding tube will take time, but it's important to remember that you can still do many of the things you've always enjoyed. With time and patience, tube feeding can become an ordinary part of your day, like reading the paper or getting the mail.

Visit [www.Oley.org](http://www.Oley.org) to read inspiring stories about people who have successfully integrated tube feeding into their lives.



Additional comments \_\_\_\_\_  
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Call **1-800-776-OLEY** or visit [www.Oley.org](http://www.Oley.org) for more information about tube feeding.