



Breastfeeding Committee For
Saskatchewan

Breastfeeding with a Feeding Tube

Supplemental Nursing System (SNS)

This method of feeding should be used only after instruction by a qualified caregiver.

IMPORTANT

- A feeding tube is usually a **temporary** way to feed a baby
- At home, check feeding tube before each use. Tubes become stiff and should be thrown out after 1 week of use.
- There are professional devices available-check with your local pharmacy.

The first milk choice is your own expressed breast milk. If artificial baby milk (formula) is used discuss the possible health risks with your health care provider.

For further information contact:

Local Public Health Nurse

Lactation Consultant

*Local Health Care
Provider*

*Local breastfeeding support
group*

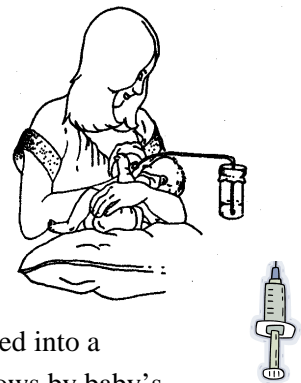
HealthLine
1-877-800-0002

Why is a feeding tube used?

- To give the baby extra milk while breastfeeding.
- To keep baby nursing and teach baby to stay latched at the breast.

Getting ready

- Wash your hands.
- Gather the supplies:
 - expressed breast milk or formula warmed to room temperature
 - 15" #5 French feeding tube (may also use longer tubing with the end placed into a container rather than a syringe); milk flows by baby's quality of suck and container can be slightly raised or lowered to control flow.
 - 12 mL (or other size) syringe or container
 - tape
 - syringe to clean feeding tube.
 - bowl with clean warm water.



Using the feeding tube

Filling the syringe

- Hold the tip of the 12 mL syringe in the milk.
- Pull back on the plunger to fill syringe with milk.
- Remove any air from the syringe by:
 - pointing the tip of the syringe upwards.
 - pulling back on the plunger to draw milk from the tip.
 - pushing the plunger upwards until the air is pushed out and milk fills to the end of the tip of the syringe.
- Attach the syringe to the large end of the feeding tube.
- Push milk through feeding tube to fill it with milk.



Container method:

- Place the large end of the feeding tube in the container below the level of milk. Hold in place with tape or by placing the tube through an enlarged hole if using a bottle.

Positioning Method 1

- Make sure you sit comfortably.
- Tape or hold the other end of the feeding tube onto your breast so the tip of the feeding tube is at the end/tip of your nipple.
- Latch baby onto your breast in any feeding position you prefer.

Positioning Method 2

- While baby is latched at the breast, slip the feeding tube into the corner of the baby's mouth, aiming towards the roof of the mouth.

Feeding the Baby:

- If baby needs a bit of encouragement to suck, use breast compression. It may help to slowly push the syringe plunger, or slightly raise the container, to give baby a few drops of milk.
- When the baby's suckling slows down at the breast, push syringe plunger slowly. **Do not** press the plunger faster than baby can easily suckle and swallow. When baby stops suckling, stop pressing the plunger. (most babies are able to draw the milk without pushing the plunger)

Cleaning the Feeding Tube

In the Hospital:

- Use a clean feeding tube and syringe each time.

At Home:

- Take the syringe apart.
- Wash (**do not boil**) the tube and syringe with hot, soapy water (mild liquid hand soap).
- Use another syringe with hot water to rinse the inside of the tube by attaching the tube to syringe and push hot water through the tube.
- Push air through the tube with syringe and hang to dry.
- Rinse syringe well and place on a clean dry cloth and allow to air dry.
- Store the tube and syringe in a clean container.

Stay in touch with your appropriate health care provider if you are breastfeeding with a feeding tube.