



### **IMPORTANT**

· A feeding tube is usually a temporary way to feed a baby.

· There are professional devices available; check with your local pharmacy.

· The milk of choice is your own expressed breast milk. If you are unable to get enough expressed breast milk, you may need to use some commercial formula, as well.

# **Breastfeeding**

## **Using a Feeding Tube--SNS**

### **(Supplemental Nursing System)**

#### **Why is a feeding tube used?**

- To give the baby extra milk while breastfeeding
- To keep the baby nursing and teach the baby to stay latched at the breast
- For babies who have suck issues or who are premature
- For adoptive mothers
- For women who are wanting to relactate

#### **Getting ready:**

- Wash your hands
- Gather supplies you will need:
  - milk warmed to room temperature
  - 36" #5 French feeding tube OR
  - 15" #5 French feeding tube and 12 cc syringe
  - tape
  - container for the milk

#### **Using the feeding tube:**

##### **When using a 36" tube:**

- Place the large end of the feeding tube in the milk container (for example, a bottle) below the level of the milk. Hold in place with tape or by placing the tube through an enlarged hole in the nipple.
- Tape the other end of the feeding tube onto the breast so that its end is at the end of the nipple.
- NOTE: Some mothers prefer to insert the tip of the tube into the corner of the baby's mouth once he/she is well latched.
- Assume a comfortable position and bring the baby to your breast.
- Maintain the level of the bottle so the baby is sucking and swallowing well (approximately the same level as the breast).
- It should take about 15-20 minutes, or less, for the baby to take one ounce, or 30 ml., of milk.

**When using a 15" tube:**

- Draw up 12 ml. of milk into the syringe; attach feeding tube. Fill the tube with milk by pushing on the plunger of the feeding tube.
- Tape the other end of either feeding tube onto the breast so that its end is at the end of the nipple.
- NOTE: Some mothers prefer to insert the tip of the tube into the corner of the baby's mouth once he/she is well latched.
- Assume a comfortable position and bring the baby to your breast.
- As the baby is sucking, the plunger of the syringe will move into the barrel; you may need to gently push on the plunger if the baby is not able to draw it down by himself/herself. Ensure that the baby is sucking before putting gentle pressure on the plunger.
- It should take about 15-20 minutes, or less, for the baby to take one ounce, or 30 ml., of milk.

**NOTE:** A professional Supplemental Nursing System may be purchased for long term supplementing at the breast.

**Cleaning the feeding tube:**

- Wash the tube with hot water and dish soap and rinse with hot water, after every feed, using the syringe to push the water through the tube.
- Push air through the tube and hang to dry.
- Take the syringe apart.
- Store the tube and syringe in a clean container.
- Use a new tube and syringe every 24 hours.

Adapted with permission from:  
Breastfeeding Committee for Saskatchewan  
Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region