

# How to give your medicine by enteral tube

## Patient information

### Your medicines

Your discharge information includes a list of your medicines. If a medicine is not available in a liquid form your pharmacist can advise the best method of preparing and giving it into the tube. Ask your pharmacist to write the letter **A**, **B** or **C** next to each medicine and follow the step by step instructions over the page. Only use the method indicated by your pharmacist.

Timing of enteral feeding is important for some medicines because enteral nutrition may affect absorption. This won't matter as much if you have a PEG-J tube. Ask your pharmacist if you are unsure about when to take your medicines in relation to your enteral nutrition.

### Giving your medicines

You will need an enteral syringe to give medicines into your enteral tube. It is very important to use the syringe that fits your tube connection. Ask your pharmacist which is the correct option for your tube.

**Enteral syringe**



**Tablet crushers**



### Liquid medicines

You may also need an adaptor for the bottle. Ask your pharmacist to show you how to measure the dose correctly.

### Crushing or dispersing medicines

Some medicines can cause harm if they are crushed or dispersed. **Never crush or disperse a medicine unless you have checked with your pharmacist that it is safe to do so.**

If changes are made to your medicines check with your pharmacist for the best way to give them into the tube, even if the change seems small, like switching from a capsule to a tablet, or changing brand.

You will need a tablet crusher or a small mortar and pestle to crush your medicine to a fine powder or it may block the tube. All of the crushed tablet must be used to make sure you receive the correct dose. Tablet crushers can be purchased from your local pharmacy.

Only crush or disperse one medicine at a time and only give one medicine at a time. Use water at room temperature and always prepare your medicines just before you need them.



### Liquid medicines

1. Stop the enteral feed (if on continuous feeding).
2. Draw 30 mL of water into an enteral syringe and use this to flush the tube.
3. Draw the required dose into the enteral syringe.
4. Draw an equal volume of water into the enteral syringe and mix well.
5. Give the mixture into the tube immediately.
6. If other medicines have to be given, flush the tube with at least 5 mL of water between each one.
7. After the final medicine is given, flush the tube with 30 mL of water.
8. Restart the feed when appropriate.



## A

**Method A: Disperse the tablet in water**

1. Stop the enteral feed (if on continuous feeding).
2. Draw 30 mL of water into an enteral syringe and use this to flush the tube.
3. Remove the plunger and place the tablet in the enteral syringe. Replace the plunger.
4. Draw 10 to 20 mL of water into the enteral syringe and allow the tablet to disperse. This may take several minutes. Shake gently if required. Make sure the tablet is completely and evenly dispersed so it does not block the tube.
5. Give the dispersion into the tube immediately.
6. Rinse the enteral syringe with another 10 mL of water and give this into the tube as well.
7. If other medicines have to be given, flush the tube with at least 5 mL of water between each one.
8. After the final medicine is given, flush the tube with 30 mL of water.
9. Restart the feed when appropriate.



## B

**Method B: Crush the tablet**

1. Stop the enteral feed (if on continuous feeding).
2. Draw 30 mL of water into an enteral syringe and use this to flush the tube.
3. Crush the tablet to a fine powder using a mortar and pestle or a tablet crusher.
4. Add 10 mL of water to the powder and mix well.
5. Draw the mixture into the enteral syringe.
6. Rinse the crushing device twice with 10 to 20 mL of water so that all the medicine is removed and add this to the enteral syringe. Shake gently to make an even mixture so that it does not block the tube.
7. Give the mixture into the tube immediately.
8. Rinse the enteral syringe with another 10 mL of water and give this into the tube as well.
9. If other medicines have to be given, flush the tube with at least 5 mL of water between each one.
10. After the final medicine is given, flush the tube with 30 mL of water.
11. Restart the feed when appropriate.



## C

**Method C: Disperse the contents of a capsule or sachet**

1. Stop the enteral feed (if on continuous feeding).
2. Draw 30 mL of water into an enteral syringe and use this to flush the tube.
3. Open the capsule or sachet and add the contents to the enteral syringe.
4. Draw 10 to 20 mL of water into the enteral syringe and mix well. Shake gently if required to make an even mixture so that it does not block the tube.
5. Give the mixture into the tube immediately.
6. Rinse the enteral syringe with another 10 mL of water and give this into the tube as well.
7. If other medicines have to be given, flush the tube with at least 5 mL of water between each one.
8. After the final medicine is given, flush the tube with 30 mL of water.
9. Restart the feed when appropriate.

