

FEEDING TUBE CARE AND INSTRUCTIONS



Your pet has been discharged with a feeding tube in place. This tube has been inserted into a specific part of the gastrointestinal tract to allow for enteral feeding—providing essential nutrition without the need for oral intake. The exact type and location of the tube depend on your pet's medical condition and nutritional needs.

Your veterinarian will guide you on how long the feeding tube will remain in place. This will depend on your pet's recovery and nutritional status.

The amount and frequency of feeding have been carefully calculated to meet your pet's needs at this stage of recovery.

It's important to follow feeding instructions exactly and **only use the prescribed food and quantities**.

Feeding Instructions

You will be shown how to feed your pet using the tube. Below are step-by-step guidelines:

1. **Keep the tube capped and clamped** when not in use to prevent leakage.
2. **Prepare the feed** into a thin slurry using the prescribed food and water. The mixture should be smooth to avoid tube blockage and warmed to body temperature (test on your wrist before use). Avoid using microwaves, as this can create hot spots that may burn.
3. **Check residual stomach contents:**
 - Attach a 60 mL syringe with 10–15 mL lukewarm water to the tube.
 - Unclamp and gently pull back the plunger. If you retrieve less than 10 mL of stomach contents, proceed with feeding. If more than 10 mL is retrieved, do not feed. Wait 2 hours and try again.
4. **Flush the tube** with 10–15 mL of lukewarm water to prevent clogging.
5. **Administer the feed** slowly over 5–10 minutes using a syringe.
6. **Flush again** with 10–15 mL lukewarm water after the feed to clear the tube.
7. **Clamp and cap the tube** immediately after finishing the feed.

Important Care Notes

- **Never feed orally unless instructed by your vet.**
- **Always monitor for signs of nausea** (drooling, retching, vomiting) or discomfort during feeding.
- **Keep the Elizabethan collar (if provided) on at all times** to prevent tube removal or interference.
- **Feeds that are too hot can cause internal burns**—ensure food is body temperature before administration.

- **Discard unused food after 24 hours** and refrigerate the rest. Mix with warm water before the next feed and check temperature before use.

Daily Tube Site Care

- Unwrap the neck bandage daily.
- Gently clean the site with saline.
- Look for signs of redness, swelling, discharge, or tube movement.
- Apply fresh gauze with Betadine cream if directed.

When to STOP Feeding and Contact the Clinic Immediately

- The tube appears to be dislodged or partially removed.
- Your pet shows signs of nausea or vomiting.
- Your pet is uncomfortable during feeding.
- There is any change in the tube site or sudden behavioural change.

Troubleshooting Blocked Tubes

- Ensure the clamp is open.
- Try flushing with warm water.
- Flush with 5–10 mL of Coca-Cola if food appears dried or clogged (yes, this can help!).
- Gently pull back on the plunger to see if material is released.
- If these steps don't resolve the blockage, contact the clinic immediately.



Feeding tube care can seem complex at first, but it becomes routine with practice. Please don't hesitate to call the clinic if you have any concerns or if anything about the tube or your pet's behaviour changes.

We are here to help ensure your pet receives the nutrition they need for a strong recovery!