

Nutrition and dietetics

# Caring for your JEJ tube

A guide for patients and carers

This booklet provides basic information on how to care for your JEJ tube and includes your feeding regimen. Your dietitian, ward nurse or enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist will be happy to help you if you have further queries or concerns.

### What is a JEJ tube?

A surgical jejunostomy (JEJ) tube is a small plastic tube that is inserted into your jejunum, part of your small bowel, by-passing your stomach. Your JEJ tube allows you to be fed directly into your jejunum and to receive the food and fluid that you require.

### How long will my tube last?

An enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist or dietitian will be able to advise you on how long your tube will last.

### Flushing your JEJ tube

You clean the inside of your JEJ tube by flushing it. It is important to flush your tube regularly to prevent it blocking. Your JEJ tube should be flushed with a 60ml enteral syringe containing at least 60ml of sterile or cooled freshly boiled water as advised by your dietitian.

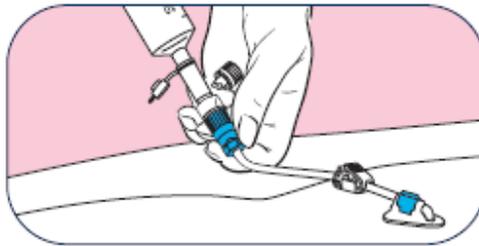
Your JEJ tube **must** be flushed

- before and after each feed
- before and after each medication
- at least once a day if you are not using your feeding tube for medication or feed.

Remember not to put anything down your tube other than feed, water or liquid medication.

You should also keep the end of your JEJ tube clean.

Your dietitian or enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist will advise you on the best way of doing this.



## What is a stoma site?

The point where the JEJ tube enters your body is called the stoma. The area of skin around the stoma is called the stoma site.

## How do I take care of the stoma site?

Initially you may experience a discharge from your stoma site so a dressing may be needed. Use a breathable type of dressing to avoid your stoma site getting sweaty and sore.

When the stoma site has healed (usually two weeks after the tube is placed) a dressing should not be necessary. However, if you feel more secure with a dressing over the stoma site, a breathable dressing can be used.

After your stoma site has healed (usually two weeks) you may bath or go swimming but while you are in the water it is advisable that you use a waterproof dressing to protect your skin.

### How do I care for my JEJ tube and stitches?

The triangular fixation plate will be stitched onto your skin and held in position with either two or three stitches.

If your stitches become loose or come out they will need to be re-stitched urgently. Please contact your GP or local A&E

The fixation plate should not be removed or moved once stitched in position

department if this happens. You may have been provided with a spare stitch kit; take this with you to speed up the process. If you are able to attend a hospital in Oxford please contact your local team who may be able to arrange a re-stitch for you directly.

**Daily care of your JEJ tube and stoma site after 10 days**

Before and after touching your stoma site, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

Clean under the fixation plate using soap and water. If the site looks infected use sterile water.

Gently dry the whole area thoroughly and leave it open to the air until completely dry.

Check your sutures are secure and clean.  
Note the position of the tube (measurement on tube).

You may have a shower.  
You may bath after your stoma site is healed (usually 2 weeks after tube placement).

Do not use creams or talcum powder around the stoma site, these can irritate the skin.

## Troubleshooting

In the first few days after having your JEJ inserted if you experience:

- bleeding from the site
- leaking from the site
- a lot of pain
- a temperature

You should contact the enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist, on telephone 01865 740378 or 01865 741166 and bleep 4132, in office hours. Out of office hours ring 01865 741166 and bleep 4084 to contact the nutrition registrar on call.

## What do I do if my JEJ tube falls out?

Your JEJ tube will need to be replaced very quickly as your stoma tract will close.

If you have been supplied with an NG tube, this can be used to keep your stoma tract open until you are able to attend A&E or contact the enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist in Oxford on telephone 01865 741166, bleep 4132/4347, your dietitian or GP who can contact your local hospital to arrange re-insertion.

To insert the NG tube, lubricate the end of the NG tube and then gently push into your stoma tract until resistance is felt. Secure the tube in place with the dressing provided.

If you do not have an NG tube you will need to attend A&E urgently. Cover the stoma site with a clean towel or dressing and save the tube. The tube needs to be reinserted as quickly as possible before the stoma tract closes. It is also advisable to contact your medical team prior to leaving home.

## Oral hygiene (mouth care)

If all your food is taken via your tube, dental plaque can still build up quickly in your mouth. It is important to clean your teeth at least twice a day if possible to guard against gum infections. An artificial saliva or mouth wash may help if your mouth is dry. Check with your nurse or doctor about this. If your mouth feels sticky, a steam inhalation may help.

## Blocked tube

Any suspected tube blockage should be dealt with immediately to increase the chance of unblocking the tube

If the tube is blocked try the following:

- Gently squeeze the tube up and down between two fingers.
- Using a 20ml syringe try to flush the tube with warm water.
- Attach an empty 20ml syringe to the end of the tube and gently push and pull on the plunger of the syringe creating a gentle pumping action.
- Try to flush with 10ml soda water in a 20ml syringe. Replace tube cap and undo clamp. Wait at least 15 minutes before trying to flush the tube.
- If you have clog zapper administer following the instructions on the packet.
- If you do not have clog zapper or if the tube remains blocked contact the enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist, your dietitian or out of hours contact the on-call upper GI specialist registrar via the Churchill Hospital switchboard on telephone 01865 741841.

# What is my feeding regimen?

Do not use any other methods to unblock the tube. Your dietitian has prescribed the volume of feed and water that meets your needs and a suitable method and rate for you to administer this. This is called your feeding regimen. Try to keep to the recommended regimen. Please discuss with your dietitian if you would like to change the feeding regimen in any way.

## Syringes

Syringes are used to flush the tube with water, to give medication or on the advice of your dietitian to give feed (bolus feeding). At home the syringes can be reused as directed by your dietitian. The syringes should be washed after each use as advised.

## Giving sets

A giving set links the bottle of feed, via a pump, to your feeding tube. Giving sets must be changed every 24 hours and the used set thrown away.

## Feed

- Feed should be stored at room temperature.
- Feed should be discarded after 24 hours.
- If you have an opened bottle of feed (to be fed later that day), then store the feed away from heat sources and direct sunlight. Leave the giving set attached to the feed and place the dust cap on.

## Will I be able to eat and drink?

This will depend on your medical condition. Discuss this with your dietitian, speech and language therapist or doctor.

## Dislodged tube

If you think that the tube has dislodged, do not feed or flush. Contact the enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist or your doctor.

## Who should I contact for help?

If you experience persistent nausea, vomiting, cramps, diarrhoea or constipation, then contact your dietitian, enteral nutrition clinical nurse specialist or GP.

If you have any pump or feed related problems such as difficulty setting up, running the feed or curdled feed contact the pump manufacturer on the helpline number or contact the enteral feed company nurse.

## Concerns and complaints

We aim to provide you with a high quality service at all times. However, if you have any concerns, complaints or comments about your experience of our service then please tell a member of the team or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on freephone 0800 328 7971.

## Enteral feeding regime for

.....

Date:

Feed:

Water:

Rate:

This feed will provide .....kcal and .....ml of fluid

### Notes:

- Flush tube with a minimum of 60ml water before and after feeding and between bottles.
- Flush tube with water before and after each medication administered via the tube.
- Remain at an angle of 45° during feeding and for at least 30 minutes post feeding.
- Change giving sets and feed containers **every 24 hours**.

## Notes

Please use this page to write down any useful notes that will help you manage your tube feed.

If you would like to have information translated into a different language, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team at: [EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)

**Arabic** يُرجى الاتصال بنا إذا كنتم ترغبون في الحصول على المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بتسبيق مختلف.

আপনি এই তথ্য অন্য ভাষায় বা আলাদা আকারে **Bengali** পেতে চাইলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।  
**Urdu** اگر آپ یہ معلومات دیگر زبان یا مختلف فارمیٹ میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

**Chinese** 若要以其他語言或格式提供這些資訊，請與我們聯繫

**Polish** Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, skontaktuj się z nami.

**Portuguese** Queira contactar-nos se pretender as informações noutra idioma ou num formato diferente.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust  
Trust Headquarters  
Littlemore Mental Health Centre  
Sandford Way  
Oxford  
OX4 4XN

Switchboard 01865 901 000  
Email [enquiries@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)  
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