



CARE OF AN ESOPHAGOSTOMY (E) FEEDING TUBE

Temperature of formula: Always feed the formula through the E-tube at room temperature, or slightly warmer, to avoid vomiting. Prior to feeding, draw up the required volume of formula into the syringe(s), and let it stand for a while at room temperature, or in warm water. Do not microwave. Test the temperature by placing a drop of the warmed feeding formula on the inside of your wrist. It should feel lukewarm.

Rate of administration: Always feed the formula through the E-tube very slowly (over 15-20 minutes) to decrease the incidence of vomiting. If your pet is showing signs of nausea during feeding (licking lips, drooling, or vomits) then feeding may need to be even slower over 30 minutes. The minimum amount of time between feedings is 2 ½ to 3 hours.

Caring for the tube: We have placed a cloth collar around your pet's neck to protect the tube insertion site in the skin. At the area where the tube inserts into the skin we have also placed a small pad to help with any discharge. Please keep this area dry. Check the tube site every day and keep the tube and skin clean. It is normal for a small amount of serum to accumulate and form crusts at the base of the tube. You may clean gently around the site with mild soap and water using a cotton ball or q-tip, and dry thoroughly before replacing the bandage/collar. In addition to daily care at home, we recommend weekly recheck at a veterinary facility to evaluate and clean the tube site. If you see swelling, bloody discharge or pus, or have any other concerns then please contact us.

Flushing the tube: Most importantly, to avoid clogging the tube, ALWAYS remember to “flush” the E-tube with 5-10ml of warm water after administering anything through the tube (including medications and food).

Troubleshooting:

- **Vomiting:** If your pet vomits while the E-tube is in place, skip the next feeding. Then, at the feeding after that, be sure the formula is adequately warmed, and feed very slowly 1/2 normal amount. Watch your pet carefully for vomiting. If no further vomiting then return to regular feeding amount. If your pet vomits again, contact us.
- **Tube displacement:** If your pet pulls out the tube, the site will quickly heal over and no treatment is indicated. The tube cannot be easily re-inserted back into the site either. If this should occur we do recommend that you contact us and seek evaluation by a doctor to evaluate the tube site and make a plan for further care.
- **Clogging of the tube:** Despite adequate flushing, tubes can become clogged. If this occurs, try to force warm water through the tube by exerting pressure on the syringe. If

this does not work, repeat the process using 5-10ml of Coca-Cola, or meat tenderizer. This usually works! If still clogged contact us or seek veterinary evaluation.

DIET:

- Science Diet a/d: This diet is recommend for the feeding tube. The a/d diet is a soft consistency high calorie diet ideal for feeding tubes as it is easy to mix in the tube with less change of chunks and requires less quantity given more calorie amount per ml of food than other potential diets. As a higher calorie diet, there is chance of diarrhea as can be seen with any change in diet. If developing diarrhea contact us and we may discuss alterations in her treatment or diet.

Your pet's feeding formula for e-tube: 1 can of Science Diet a/d blended with 30ml of water to make a 1kcal/ml diet. You may be able to hand blend the mixture to get a liquid consistency for the tube, but if not recommend using a blender. It is important that there are not large chunks in the food which could clog the tube. Keep the unused portions of blended feeding formula in tightly sealed containers in the refrigerator.

Resting energy requirement: For your pet's weight goal of #INPUT#, we estimate resting energy requirement around #INPUT#kcal per day and daily energy requirement around #INPUT#kcal per day. To start we are aiming at slowly increasing her caloric amount over the next week to around #INPUT#kcal per day. We will monitor weight to determine how we may need to adjust calorie goes. If gaining weight then we will decrease to #INPUT#kcal and if losing weight we will increase to #INPUT#kcal.

Your pet's personalized feeding schedule: To feed smaller amounts we recommend feeding about every 6 hours (four times daily). If your pet is doing well with the feeding amount with no vomiting and four times daily is difficult then we may be able to decrease the frequency to every 8 hours (three times daily). You will be working closely with your pets internist to develop an individualized feeding plan. Please refer to your pets discharge instructions after the appointment.

Offering food: Even though your pet is receiving nutrition through the E-tube, the ultimate goal is to support them until they can eat enough food themselves. Therefore, it is a good idea to continue to feed your pet regular meals in their favorite dish to entice them to eat on their own! Once they start eating on their own we can start to decrease tube feedings with our overall caloric goal intake being still the same.

Medications: If any liquid medications are to be given, they may be administered through the E-tube, unless otherwise directed by your doctor. If your pet requires any medications that are in tablet form, you may be able to crush the tablets up into a fine powder and mix it with water so that it may be administered through the E-tube. Some medications, however, will clog the tube if administered in this way. Contact us if you have any questions about which medications can be used in the tube.