

# Child Health Notes

Promoting early identification and partnerships between families, primary health care providers & the community.

Distributed by: Spokane Regional Health District - Children with Special Health Care Needs Program. Contributors: Washington State Department of Health and University of Washington - Center on Human Development and Disability. Electronic versions of Spokane Child Health Notes: [www.srhd.org/health/women-children/childhealthnotes.asp](http://www.srhd.org/health/women-children/childhealthnotes.asp)



## Gavage Tube

placed through mouth for short-term feeding

## Nasogastric Tube

placed through nose for short-term feeding

## Gastrostomy Tube

placed surgically or by endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) in the stomach

## Jejunum Tube

placed surgically into the jejunum, requires continuous feedings

## Tube Feedings: Managing the Nutrition Issues

To assure that children with tube feedings are growing appropriately and meeting their nutritional needs, it is important for the primary care provider to work collaboratively with the family and a registered dietitian (RD). Children unable to eat adequate amounts of food and/or fluid by mouth require tube feedings to meet their individual energy and nutrient needs. Tube feedings (enteral feeding) benefit children by:

- ◆ Assuring appropriate nutritional status to support growth and development
- ◆ Relieving the family's anxiety over adequate nutrition intake for their child
- ◆ Improving hydration, bowel function and administration of medication

### Reasons for Tube Feedings:

A child may need a tube feeding to fully replace oral feedings, or to supplement oral feedings. Reasons may include:

- ◆ The infant or child is unable to eat by mouth for medical reasons (e.g. prematurity, unsafe swallow, etc.)
- ◆ The infant or child needs to "learn" how to eat orally (e.g. developmental or behavioral issue)
- ◆ To provide supplemental feedings beyond what the child can consume daily by mouth due to: neuromuscular disorders – e.g. cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy; disorders that effect eating and/or digestion; conditions that increase energy needs – e.g. cystic fibrosis, burns.

### Things to Consider For Your Practice • Assure that:

1. Child's nutrition is adequately advanced for appropriate growth and development.
2. Families have adequate resources for the required tube feeding equipment and food. Provide prescriptions/letters of support as needed to WIC, state health insurance programs, and/or private insurance companies.
3. Families have regular consultation with a registered dietitian (RD).
4. Child's growth parameters from each office appointment (length/height, weight, head circumference, and weight-for-length or body mass index {BMI}) are communicated to the RD consulting with the child and family.

### Ways a Registered Dietitian Can Support Providers & Families

RDs evaluate and monitor a child's growth, the adequacy of nutrition intake, formula tolerance and the need for food/formula changes. In Washington State, RDs that have met specific Washington State certification criteria also use the professional title CD, for Certified Dietitian. The **Washington State Medicaid** (Health Recovery Services Administration, formerly MAA) requires that all clients age 20 and younger must be evaluated by a CD with a current Medicaid provider number within 30 days of initiation of enteral nutrition products and periodically (at the discretion of the CD) while receiving enteral nutrition products. For children with **private insurance**, companies may pay for RD services. A referral from the primary care provider may be required and the RD may need to be a network provider.

## Suggested Schedule for Monitoring Tube Feeding by a Registered Dietitian (RD)

<b>New to tube feeding (All ages)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> month: weekly contact with RD 2 <sup>nd</sup> month: bi-weekly contact with RD
<b>Infants</b>	Every 1-3 weeks for first year after initial follow-up for new tube feeding; review intake on regular basis
<b>Children &lt; 3 years</b>	Re-evaluate every 2-3 months once weight gain and growth has been stable for 2 months
<b>Children &gt; 3 years</b>	Re-evaluate every 6 months once weight gain and growth has been stable for 2 months
<b>Adolescents</b>	Evaluate every 1-3 months during puberty to insure adequate energy & nutrition intake; every 6 months once weight gain and growth are stable
<b>All ages</b>	Refer to RD when a formula change is considered, if growth or feeding issues arise, or if formula feeding method changes (e.g. change from continuous to bolus feeds or to all oral feeds).

## How to find a RD or nutrition services in your community:

Home health care agencies and enteral supply companies that have RDs on staff and provide home visits	Life Care Solutions . . . . . 509-921-6560 Option Care . . . . . 509-326-0306 Apria Health Care . . . . . 509-489-1000 Evergreen Home Care . . . . . 509-838-0870 Integrated Health Professionals . . . . . 509-924-1826
Community feeding team	Sacred Heart Childrens Hospital Feeding & Growth Clinic . . . . . 509-474-7185
WIC programs	WIC-Spokane Regional Health District East Central Community Center . . . . . 509-323-2830 North Spokane (Lidgerwood) . . . . . 509-323-2818 Northeast Community Center . . . . . 509-323-2828 Spokane (Downtown) and Deer Park . . . . . 509-324-1620 Valley Center . . . . . 509-323-2800 WIC-West Central Community Center . . . . . 509-323-7497 Includes sites in Cheney, Airway Heights, and Fairchild
Nutrition Network for Children with Special Health Care Needs in Washington state	To locate a CSHCN Nutrition Network RD in your county: <a href="http://www.cshcn.org/resources.Resourceguides.cfm">http://www.cshcn.org/resources.Resourceguides.cfm</a> Click on Spokane County; scroll down to Nutrition on the Resource/Referral list
Children with Special Health Care Needs Program	509-324-1696

## Information & Resources:

### Reference

Pederson AL. Tube Feeding Update. NUTRITION FOCUS Newsletter - University of Washington. Vol 17(6); Nov./Dec. 2002. For information about Nutrition Focus: [http://depts.washington.edu/chdd/ucedd/ctu\\_5/nutritionnews\\_5.html](http://depts.washington.edu/chdd/ucedd/ctu_5/nutritionnews_5.html)

### WA State

Nutrition Network for Children with Special Health Care Needs • [http://depts.washington.edu/cshcnut/cshcn\\_nut\\_net.html](http://depts.washington.edu/cshcnut/cshcn_nut_net.html)



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