

# Proper Medication Delivery via Feeding Tube

## Medications:

- If you are able to swallow your medications safely, do so. Putting crushed pills in your feeding tube increases the risk of clogging the tube. If you are unable to swallow your medications, ask your provider if your medications can be crushed or if a liquid form is available. Do NOT crush modified-release tablets (XR, SR, ER, CR, LA). Crushing these can release too much medication at once, which may cause serious side effects. Liquid medications usually require further dilution with water.
- Use only purified water (e.g., distilled water or bottled water labeled purified) to dilute medications. Purified water is free of minerals and contaminants that might interact with the medication.
- Flush before and after giving each medication with at least 15 mL of purified water.
- Give each medication separately. Do not mix medications together or with your tube feeding formula. Mixing can reduce the effectiveness of the medication or clog the tube.
- Hydration water flushes: It is fine to use tap water or bottled water for water flushes that are not related to medications.
- Water used for medication flushes can be counted as part of your total daily fluid intake goal.
- If you have both a gastric and jejunal tube, clarify with your provider which route (gastric or jejunal) to use for your medications. For medications given via gastric route that is also used for drainage or venting, be sure to clamp the tube for at least 30 minutes afterwards for proper medication absorption.



# Clearing a Clogged Feeding Tube

## Supplies:

- 30 – 60 mL ENFit syringe
- Warm tap water

### *If needed:*

- Viokace tablet 20,880 units, requires a prescription
- Baking soda
- Purified water
- 1/8 teaspoon measuring spoon

## Procedure:

- Work on the clog as soon as possible.
- Attach empty syringe to feeding tube and pull out as much fluid as you can and discard.
- Draw up tap water into syringe, attach to feeding tube and using a gentle “back and forth” motion with the syringe plunger, try to loosen and withdraw clog. If successful, discard clog and flush tube with 30 mL tap water.
- If procedure above does not work, leave tap water in tube and clamp it, move on to Viokace® method.

## Viokace/ Baking Soda Tube Unclogging:

- Dissolve rounded 1/8” tsp baking soda in 10 mL purified water.
- Crush one Viokace tablet and stir into the baking soda/water mix until fully dissolved. This will take a few minutes.
- In the meantime, attach a syringe to the feeding tube and attempt another gentle “back and forth” motion with syringe plunger to see if clog can be withdrawn and discarded.
- If not, draw up Viokace® solution in syringe, attach to feeding tube and gently push as much as you can into tube, then cap tube. Do not discard remaining Viokace® solution.
- After 30 minutes, attach empty syringe to feeding tube and attempt gentle “back and forth” motion to try to loosen and withdraw clog. If successful, discard clog and flush tube with 30 mL tap water.
- If tube is not cleared, remove fluid and you may repeat this procedure one or two more times with remaining Viokace® solution.

*Notify the Nutrition Support Clinic at 585-275-3995  
with any questions or if you are unsuccessful with unclogging the tube*