

Step by Step Guide

You will have been told what type of water to use. The volumes suggested in this leaflet are just a guide, and your specific amounts may vary, see below.

How do I take my medicines?

If you can still swallow your medicines, you should take them this way.

If you need to give your medicines via your feeding tube, you should follow these instructions.

1. Switch off the feed if it is running.
2. Flush the tube with _____ ml of water (at least 30ml or as directed by your healthcare advisor).
3. Prepare your medicine as instructed e.g. crush tablet and disperse in water (this should be done one medicine at a time, unless you have been told otherwise)
4. Give medicine down feeding tube.
5. Draw up 10ml of water into the same syringe and flush down feeding tube.
6. Repeat from step 3 if giving more than one medicine.
7. Finally flush tube with _____ ml of water.
8. Restart feed if necessary. You may need to allow some time for the medicine to work: See the special instructions section on your medicines chart.

Types of Medicines

Tablets

Immediate release tablets – these are 'ordinary' tablets, sometimes they can be sugar or film coated. Some of these tablets will disperse if left in water.

Soluble tablets – these tablets dissolve completely to leave a clear or coloured solution.

Dispersible tablets – these tablets break down to a fine powder when put in water.

Special release – these tablets can be called slow release, modified release or enteric coated and usually have the letters XL, LA, SR, MR, EC or CR in the name. These should **NOT** be crushed and are not suitable for use via a feeding tube.

Methods of crushing tablets

You should only crush tablets to put down your feeding tube if your pharmacist or nutrition nurse has told you it is OK to do so.

Tablets can be crushed in a pestle and mortar. There are also some special devices that can be used for crushing tablets.

Capsules

Most capsules have a gelatin shell with loose powder inside that can be mixed with water. Some contain granules and others are soft capsules filled with liquid. Advice should be sought before giving these via your feeding tube.

Liquids

Liquid medicines can be solutions, syrups or suspensions. Some liquid medicines are very thick and you may be told to mix them with water before putting them down the tube. This should be done just before giving the dose.



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Advancing Clinical Nutrition

Tube Feeding and Your Medicines

A Guide for
Patients and Carers

