

ENFit Feeding Tubes

Cleaning and Syringe Use



Tube connectors

ENFit connectors are used on feeding tubes, also called enteral tubes, and on any syringes, caps or extension tubing used with the feeding tubes. These connectors need to be **twisted together** rather than pushed together. The connection should be **snug but not too tight**.



Clean connectors daily

Clean each tube connector, cap and extension tubing at least 1 time each day.

Each day and any time there is medicine or feeding build up, you need to clean the feeding tube ports and connectors. This is to prevent the tubes from sticking together.

Limit the amount of medicine or feeding that gets in the connectors.

- Stop the feeding just before the last connector that will attach to the feeding tube when using a bag or pump for your feeding. This does not apply to bolus feeding.
- When using a syringe, be sure there is no extra feeding or medicine in the tip of the syringe, or in the moat of the low dose syringe.

Wash hands and collect supplies

Wash your hands well with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and then rinse with clean water. Dry well with a clean towel.

Gather your supplies. You will need:

- Clean warm tap water
- ENFit syringe
- Brush, such as a toothbrush - **Use this brush only for cleaning feeding tube connectors and caps.**
- Gauze pad or clean paper towel



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Steps for cleaning tube and cap

1. Wash hands again.
Dry with a clean towel.



2. Fill the syringe with clean water.

3. Wet the brush in clean water.



4. Use the brush to clean in and around the moat of the connector on the feeding tube.



5. Rinse the connector moat with water from the syringe.



6. Repeat steps 3 through 5 to clean the cap and tube well.

7. Wipe the feeding tube end and cap with a clean gauze pad or paper towel to dry. Replace the cap or reconnect the feeding.



8. Rinse the brush in clean water and set it on a clean towel to air dry.
9. Pull the plunger out of the syringe. Rinse the parts of the syringe and cup used to hold the water in warm, clean water. Set them aside on a clean towel to air dry until the next use.

If tube connections are stuck

Do not force the tube connections to twist and do not use any tools on the connector. The connector could break.

If a tubing connection is stuck together, get a large bowl or other container filled with warm water. Put the connector into the water and let it soak for several minutes.

Remove the connector from the water and try to loosen it. If it is still stuck, put it back into the container of water and let it soak a few more minutes.

If you are not able to get the connection apart after soaking, call your home care nurse or doctor's office for more direction.

Cleaning extension tubing

This only applies if you have a **low profile feeding tube**.

Extension tubing should be cleaned each day and anytime there is medicine or feeding build up.

1. Wash your hands well with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Rinse well and dry with clean towel.
2. Remove the extension set and soak it in warm soapy water.
3. Remove the tube from the water.
4. Use the brush to clean in and around the ends and cap of the extension set.
5. Fill a syringe with clean water and flush it through the extension set tube or rinse the tube well under clean tap water.

6. Wipe the tube end and cap dry with a gauze pad or paper towel then set the tube aside on a clean towel until the next use.

Using medicine syringes

Your medicines may come in prefilled syringes, or you may need to fill your own syringes.

Steps to follow

1. Wash your hands well and dry them on a clean towel.
2. Pour the liquid medicine into a medicine cup.
3. Put the tip of the ENFit syringe into the medicine and pull the plunger back to pull medicine into the syringe. Push the medicine back into the cup and then pull the plunger again to fill the syringe.
4. Pull the plunger back to fill the syringe to the right dose amount.
5. Check for air bubbles and tap the syringe to move the air bubbles to the tip of the syringe. Pull more medicine into the syringe to get the right dose if needed.



6. Tap the end of the syringe on the edge of the medicine cup.

- If using the standard ENFit syringe, you should not have medicine in the tip of the syringe.



- If you are using a low dose syringe that has a moat at the tip, be sure there is no medicine in the moat. Use a clean gauze pad or paper towel to remove any excess medicine from the tip.



Ask your home care nurse, dietitian, pharmacist or enteral feeding tube provider if you have other questions.

Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, go to wexnermedical.osu.edu/patiented or contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or health-info@osu.edu.