

Administering Your Tube Feeding - Gravity

Gravity feeding is when a specific amount of formula (typically 1-3 cans) is placed into a feeding bag at one time. The gravity bag is then hung from an IV pole and the flow of formula is controlled by a roller clamp on the tubing that comes attached to the gravity feeding bag. The roller clamp is adjusted to allow the formula to flow faster or slower as needed.

Supplies Needed:

- Clean 60 mL Syringe
- Room Temperature Water
- Clean Cup
- Clean Gravity Bag Set
- Towel
- IV Pole
- Tube Feeding Formula



Steps for Gravity Feeding:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly (see instructions on Proper Handwashing in 'Introduction to Your Feeding Tube' handout).
2. Before opening, wipe off the top of the formula container and shake the can to avoid settling.
3. Making sure the roller clamp is closed on the gravity bag, fill the bag with prescribed amount of formula, and close the top of the feeding bag.
4. Hang the feeding bag on the IV pole so the bag is about 18 inches above stomach level.
5. With the tube clamped or pinched, open the cap on the end of your feeding tube port.
6. Follow instructions on Flushing Your Feeding Tube on the 'Introduction to Your Feeding Tube' handout with the prescribed amount of water (or 60 mL if specific amount not prescribed).
7. Prime your gravity feeding bag by removing the plastic cover from the end of the tubing. Holding the tip over a waste container or sink, open the roller clamp and allow formula to flow through the tubing until it reaches the end.
8. Once the formula reaches the end of the tubing, close the roller clamp.
9. Insert the end of the gravity bag tubing into the end of your feeding tube port.
10. Open the roller clamp and adjust as needed to the desired flow.
11. After your feeding is finished, and the bag is empty, re-clamp or pinch your feeding tube, remove the gravity bag tubing, and flush again with prescribed amount of water (or 60 mL if specific amount not prescribed).
12. Rinse your gravity bag and tubing with warm soapy water and then rinse with clean water to store between uses. With proper cleaning, your gravity bag can be used for 24-48 hours.