

## Tube Feeding: Skin and Mouth Care



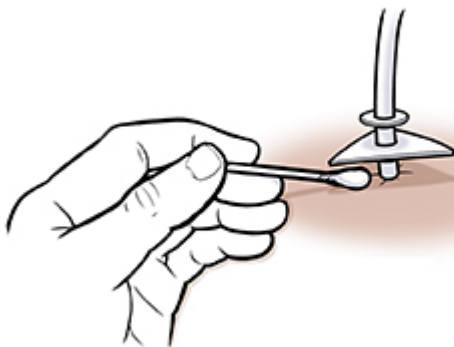
You need to keep the skin around the feeding tube dry and clean. This helps prevent soreness and infection. The mouth also needs to be cleansed, even though food isn't taken through it.

### Cleaning the skin

Gently wash the skin around the feeding tube each day. Follow these steps:

1. Wash your hands. Wet a soft cloth or gauze with warm, soapy water.
2. Gently wipe the skin around the feeding tube. Also wipe the bolster and the base of the feeding tube.
3. Rinse well with clear, warm water.
4. Pat dry with a soft cloth.

### Checking under the bolster



When you wash the skin, clean and check under the bolster. Follow these steps:

1. Gently lift the bolster just enough to get a cotton swab under it. Be careful not to pull on the feeding tube.
2. Check for redness, swelling, bleeding, or leakage around the opening.
3. Dip a cotton swab in warm water and gently clean under the bolster. Pat the skin dry.

4. Apply a protective skin barrier or antibacterial ointment if your healthcare provider tells you to.
5. Gently push the bolster back against the skin. Make sure it's not too tight against the skin.
6. Give the feeding tube a gentle 1/4 turn. This helps keep the bumper from sticking to the inside of the stomach.
7. Wash your hands.

## Caring for the mouth

To keep the mouth clean, follow these steps:

1. Brush the teeth or dentures at least once daily with a soft toothbrush.
2. Wipe the inside of the mouth with a damp washcloth.
3. Apply a lip balm to keep the lips moist.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.