

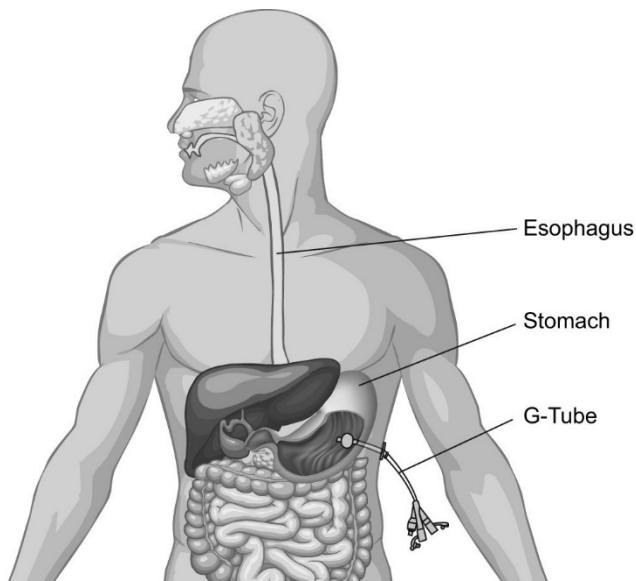
Nutrition Support during Head and Neck Cancer Treatment

Good nutrition helps your body tolerate cancer treatment better and with fewer side effects. It can also help you feel better and raise your energy level. Sometimes cancer treatment makes it hard to eat enough food. A feeding tube helps you get enough nutrition by putting liquid formula directly into your stomach.

Your cancer care team may place a feeding tube before your cancer treatment starts. Sometimes, a feeding tube is necessary later in the treatment.

About Your Feeding Tube

Your feeding tube is called a gastrostomy tube (G-tube). The G-tube passes through your abdomen. It puts liquid formula directly into your stomach.



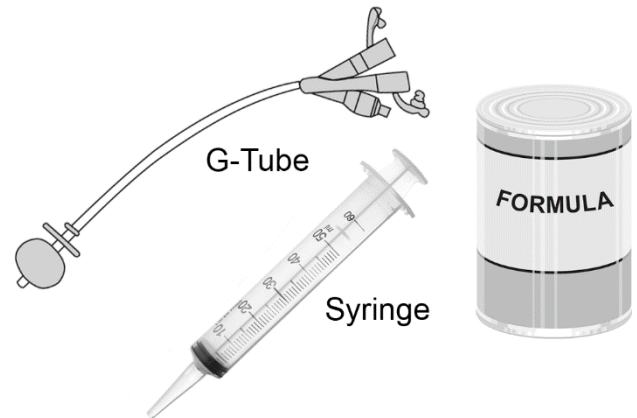
Location of G-Tube

You need to eat small meals four to six times a day. Some or all of them may be tube feedings.

The dietitian on your cancer care team will show you how to feed yourself through the G-tube before you leave the hospital.

Bolus Feeding Using a Syringe

The bolus method uses a syringe to send formula through your feeding tube. Your dietitian will tell you how much liquid formula to use for each bolus feeding and how often. You will need these items for a bolus feeding:



- G-tube
- Syringe for water and formula
- Liquid nutrition formula

Your Nutrition Needs

Current weight _____

Calories needed each day _____

Protein needed each day _____

Fluid needed each day _____

Tube feeding formula _____ cans of formula per day meet all your calorie and protein needs

Flush the G-tube with ounces of water before and after each feeding.

Drink an extra _____ ounces of water daily. If you cannot drink by mouth, use your G-tube.

Tips for Using Your G-Tube

- Eat and drink by mouth as much as you can. Do the swallowing exercises your speech therapist gives you. Continue to do these things even if it is not comfortable. They keep your swallowing muscles strong. If you have questions or concerns, call your doctor or speech therapist.
- Start using your feeding tube as soon as you notice you cannot eat as much as usual. It is better to start on the first day this happens than to get behind on your nutrition. If you lose weight, you probably are not eating enough.
- A feeding-tube meal is usually 1–2 cans of formula. Your dietitian will tell you how many meals you need per day. Replace each meal you miss with a feeding-tube meal. Use more cans of formula as you eat and drink less by mouth. This will help you stay well fed.
- Stay hydrated by taking water through your feeding tube.
- DO NOT put anything but water and formula in your feeding tube. Other liquids or pureed foods can clog it. If this happens, you will need surgery to replace your feeding tube.

For more information about good nutrition during cancer treatment, call the dietitians at the Linda B. and Robert B. Wiggins Wellness and Integrative Health Center: 801-587-4585