



NHS

**East Midlands Neonatal
Operational Delivery Network**



Tube Feeding your Baby on the Neonatal Unit & Transitional Care

Parent Information



This information leaflet was designed and produced by the East Midlands Neonatal Operational Delivery Network.

For further information on what we do, please visit our website; www.emnodn.nhs.uk

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The aim of this leaflet is to provide parents and carers with information regarding tube feeding your baby on the neonatal unit.

What is tube feeding?

Nasogastric (NG) or Orogastric (OG) feeding is a way to feed your baby when he / she is unable to take their full feed by mouth, and so the milk is given to the baby via a small tube which goes directly into his / her stomach.

Why does my baby need tube feeding?

The nurses and doctors caring for your baby will explain to you the reasons that your baby may need to be tube fed. There are many potential reasons, however the commonest reason for this is prematurity, as very small babies may not have the energy to take a full feed, or they may need time to learn how to suck effectively.

What are the benefits of tube feeding?

Tube feeding enables the baby to preserve energy for growth and development and prevents them from becoming overtired. As the baby grows bigger and stronger, then his / her ability to feed from the breast or bottle will develop and eventually he/she will be able to take all the feeds without needing the tube.

How can I learn to tube feed?

We like to encourage all parents to be as involved as possible with the care of their baby and we will begin to teach you how to tube feed as early as we can. This may entail completion of a learning package. We will not expect you to tube feed your baby unsupervised until both we, and you, are happy that you are confident and competent to do so.

What happens if my baby is moved to another unit?

In some instances babies may be moved to another hospital for their care. During your stay in any unit, we will provide you with a parent passport and your ability to tube feed, and carry out any other elements of your baby's care, will be signed off. If you are moved to another unit, you will be able to carry on tube feeding your baby in that unit. Please be aware that the nursing staff will be required to observe you giving a tube feed to enable you to continue. You may also be taught a slightly different method, this is dependant upon individual unit practices.

Further information

If you would like any further explanation, please speak to a member of staff on the neonatal unit.