



- Only staff trained by an Appropriately Qualified Health Professional (AQHP) can perform this procedure.
- This procedure is a guide only and may not be appropriate in all circumstances. Therefore, instructions from an AQHP must always be obtained and followed.
- This procedure should be read with the [NDIS LWB 5600 High Intensity Daily Personal Activities - Procedure](#), [NDIS LWB 5501 Health and Wellbeing - Procedure](#), [LWB National Medication - Procedures](#) and in consultation with the person we support or their medication documents.

An AQHP must document the person's support requirements in a HIPDA Enteral Feeding Support Plan, Medication Chart, and PRN Protocol as required.

Staff must complete training with an AQHP on the administration of medication via an enteral feeding tube before administering medication in this manner.

Medications are administered through a feeding tube when a person cannot tolerate medication orally and at the direction of their prescribing practitioner.

Enteral Syringe



Administration of Medication via the Enteral Feeding Tube - Procedure

Check

- The Enteral Feeding Support Plan will include information about administering medication and the water required to flush the tube before and after medication administration.

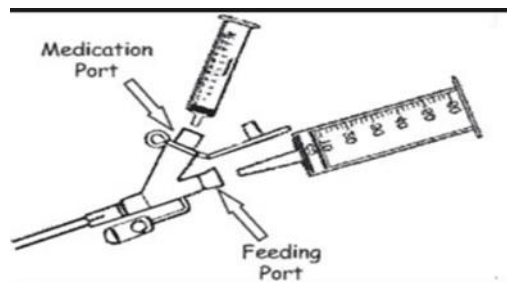
Check and follow the person's Enteral Feeding Support Plan, [Medication Support Plan](#) and [7 Rights of Medication Administration](#).

- Collect and check the person's medication documents and medication.
- Check that the required equipment and consumables are available and ready for use.
- Explain the procedure to the person and seek their consent.

- Position the person in a semi-reclined or upright position with the upper body elevated to at least 30 degrees as detailed in their Feeding Support Plan,.
- Confirm how the person would like to be actively involved in their support, as outlined in their plan, and to the level they choose.

Support

- Staff will follow all requirements within the [LWB Medication Administration - Procedures](#)
- When medication is required to be administered through a feeding tube, the person must have a current medication chart. The Medication Chart is updated every 6 months or earlier when medication changes occur. The Medication Summary is updated every 12 months or earlier as required.
- If possible, liquid or dissolvable medication should be used. Crushing tablets or opening capsules should only be used if directed to do so by the person's doctor. Some medications are not suitable to be crushed. These are:
 - Modified or slow-release preparations
 - Enteric-coated preparations
 - Buccal or sublingual tablets
 - Cytotoxics and hormonal products
- To reduce the risks associated with the route of administration, any medications administered via enteral feeding tubes and devices must be given using an enteral nutrition syringe (usually a purple syringe). See the image above.
- It is essential that medication is administered into the correct port of the tube or device. **For example, do not administer medications into the balloon port on the gastrostomy tube.**



- Medication should not be added to the feed formula. This is because the formula may stop the absorption of the medication. If this is the person's preference, the instructions should be documented on the medication chart and signed by the Doctor.
- For the nasogastric tube, the positioning of the tube should be checked before medication administration by checking the tube length using the position marker on the tube, checking in the person's mouth for the presence of the tube and using the pH test.
- The enteral feeding tube must be flushed with water before and after administering each medication. This is essential to check that the tube is not blocked. The flush volume will vary and should be included in the person's Enteral Feeding Support Plan.

- Gather the equipment:
 - Enteral nutrition syringe (size will vary according to medication)
 - The correct medication and medication chart.
 - Extension set if required (appropriate to the type of enteral tube). An extension set with a medication port is preferable if available.
 - Water for a flush.
 - A tablet-crushing device if medications are required to be crushed.
- Select a quiet location to administer medication related to the person's choice and preferences.
- Each medication required to be crushed should be crushed separately in an appropriate device.
- Refer to the person's Enteral Feeding Support Plan for the volume of water to be used for flushing the feeding tube before administering medication.
- Wash your hands with soap and water and dry well. Support workers must wear gloves during the administration of medication.
- Follow the [7 Rights of Medication Administration](#) and the person's Medication Support Plan.
- If the medication needs to be taken on an empty stomach, administer it half an hour before or two hours after the feed formula has been given.
- Attach the enteral syringe to the tube and use the medication port whenever possible.
- Fill the syringe with the set amount of water to flush before administering the medication, release the clamp and allow the water to flow down the tube.
- Draw the correct dose of liquid medication into the syringe; OR
- If medication is to be crushed, use the appropriate crushing device and mix the medication with water before drawing it into the syringe. Ensure the medication is crushed as finely as possible to minimise the risk of the tube becoming blocked.
- When more than one medication is prescribed, administer **each medication individually** and flush the tube with the required amount of water between each medication.
- During the procedure, monitor the person for signs of an adverse reaction to the medication.
- If there are concerns about the person during the procedure, stop administering medication and seek medical advice.
- When all medications have been administered, flush the tube with the prescribed amount of water. Remove the extension tube if used and ensure the feeding tube is capped or clamped.
- Check that the person is comfortable.
- Wash all equipment in warm soapy water and leave it to air dry.
- Remove and dispose of the gloves and wash your hands when the procedure is complete.

- Return all medication to a locked cupboard in keeping with the [LWB National - Medication Policy Guideline](#).
- If the tube becomes blocked during the procedure, lukewarm water can be used to flush the tube. In addition, a push-pull plunger technique can be used to break up the blockage. Check that the person has no fluid restrictions and use the minimum amount of water needed. Rolling the tube between the thumb and forefinger before and while it is being flushed can also help to break up the blockage.
If the blockage cannot be cleared, do not attempt to administer further medication. Seek medical advice.



Report

- Complete the medication chart and related medication documents as required.
- Report any concerns or issues related to the person's medication administration via enteral feeding tube immediately to the Disability Support Leader¹ or On Call.

For Further Guidance and Advice

Contact the AQHP who developed the person's support plan.

¹ All references to Disability Support Leader (DSL), includes all Frontline Leadership roles, such as House Supervisor.