



keeping the bed position $>30^\circ$ when NG or PEG feeding reduces the risk of aspiration pneumonia

SWITCH 6 026910 2014

**Information for patients with
nasogastric (NG) feeding
tubes and their relatives,
friends and carers**

This leaflet explains what the ‘FEED ME UP’ campaign is and why the angle and position of feeding is particularly important for patients with a nasogastric (NG) feeding tube. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your doctor or nurse.

What is a nasogastric tube and why is it used?

A nasogastric, or NG tube, is a thin tube that is passed through the nose and down into the stomach. NG tubes are used in patients with swallowing difficulties and in patients with extra nutritional requirements, as they allow liquid, food and medication to be delivered directly into the stomach.

Swallowing difficulties may occur following stroke (due to impaired coordination between the brain and the muscles of the throat), in head and neck cancers (either related to the cancer itself or the effects of radiotherapy and chemotherapy) or in those with critical illness (who are unable to swallow sufficient food to meet their nutritional needs).

Why is the correct position (30 degrees) important?

Whilst generally safe, one of the complications of NG feeding is aspiration pneumonia. This is a chest infection related to liquid or food entering the lungs and causing irritation. Symptoms include a productive cough – one that brings up mucus or phlegm, high temperature or breathing difficulties.

Positioning your body at the correct position helps reduce the risk of liquid or food entering the lungs, thereby reducing your chance of

developing aspiration pneumonia. For this reason we recommend that you are sat up at more than 30 degrees at all times.

‘FEED ME UP’ is a message we have developed to remind everyone to keep the bed at this recommended position. Please help our staff to do this and reduce your risk of aspiration pneumonia.

If you or your family have any questions about the ‘FEED ME UP’ campaign or about NG feeding, please speak to your nurse or ask to speak to a doctor.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Dr Caroline Watson & Dr Oliver Coen, RBFT Acute Stroke Unit, July 2015
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