



HOME TUBE FEEDING PROGRAM

Your baby may be eligible to go home supported by the Home Tube Feeding Program. This information sheet explains what occurs whilst your baby is on the program.

About the Home Tube Feeding Program

The program aims to support parents to care for their baby(s) with a nasogastric feeding tube at home.

It was set up to help babies who:

- are transitioning to full sucking breast or bottle feeds
- require nasogastric tube feeding.

To be eligible for home tube feeding babies will be:

- medically stable
- 1.8 kg at transfer to home
- able to maintain their temperature in an open cot
- gaining weight (around 10-15 grams per day)
- sucking at least half of their daily feeds
- approved for transfer home by the multidisciplinary team
- discharged home from NICU at the Women's.

How are babies chosen for the program?

The multidisciplinary team discuss which babies and families would benefit from the program at daily NICU ward rounds or at weekly team meetings.

Eligible babies will need to be around 32 weeks corrected age to be considered for the program. Families will be given education and training aimed at supporting transfer to home when their babies are around 35-36 weeks.

What education is provided to parents?

Before transfer to home parents will need to:

- watch staff perform three tube feeds
- perform three tube feeds with staff support
- perform a minimum of three tube feeds with no staff support.

Parents will receive an information sheet which explains how to check tube position when their baby is at home.

If baby is bottle feeding, parent/s must have education on formula preparation before going home.

Before babies are discharged home, parents will have an appointment with a lactation consultant to set up a feeding plan.

What happens once babies go home?

A Neonatal Hospital in the Home (NHITH) nurse will visit families at home. The nurse will weigh baby and offer support and guidance on feeding tube use.

Five days after discharge home families will have a follow-up appointment with a lactation consultant at the Women's Breastfeeding Service and baby's feeding tube will be changed in NICU.

Babies stay on the home tube feeding program and are monitored by NHITH until full sucking is established and they are gaining weight (around 10-15 grams per day).

Once babies are feeding well on their own, the nurse will remove the nasogastric tube and if baby continues to gain weight they will be discharged from NHITH.

After discharge from NHITH, babies will have their regular health checks with the local maternal & child health service and local doctor (GP).

NOTE: If baby's nasogastric tube is accidentally pulled out, families must contact NHITH on the phone number below for assistance and may need to return to NICU for a new tube to be put in.

For more information

Your baby's doctor, nurse or care manager are available to answer your questions.

Newborn Intensive Care Unit

Royal Women's Hospital

Cnr Flemington Rd and Grattan St

Parkville VIC 3052

T: (03) 8345 3400

Neonatal Hospital in the Home

T: 0418 501 253 (phone support line)

After hours: 8345 3493