

# BLENDERIZED TUBE-FEEDING

## MAKING NUTRITIOUS AND SAFE MEALS

With today's heavy-duty blenders, a parent or caregiver can make food blends for their child's gastrostomy tube. These blenderized tube-feedings (BTFs) can replace or supplement a child's standard commercial formula. If you want to create BTFs for your child, we can help you better understand the potential benefits and things to consider. This infographic does not replace any medical advice. Make sure you consult your child's healthcare provider.

### POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- Improved gastrointestinal function<sup>1,2</sup>
  - » Decreased gagging
  - » Decreased vomiting
  - » Better stool formation
- Increased interest in consumption of foods by mouth<sup>1,2</sup>
- Increased dietary variety and usage of whole foods
- Children can enjoy the same foods as their families



### THINGS TO CONSIDER

- May be inadequate and unbalanced nutrition<sup>2,3</sup>
- Micronutrient supplementation may be needed
- Risk of constipation if fluid needs are not met<sup>2</sup>
- Potential food contamination due to improper food preparation, handling, administration, and storage<sup>2,4-6</sup>
- More time-consuming and may be more expensive<sup>2</sup>
- May increase tube clogging

### DID YOU KNOW?

Real-food blends may increase good bacteria in your child's tummy, which could be why BTFs seem to improve GI function<sup>1</sup>

### DID YOU KNOW?

The general recommended blending time is 3 to 6 min<sup>1</sup>

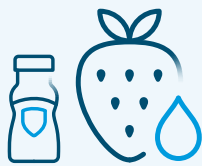
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## HOW TO PUT YOUR BEST FOOD FORWARD

If you are creating homemade blenderized tube-feedings (BTFs), make sure you consult your child's healthcare provider. After a healthcare provider has cleared your child to receive blenderized tube-feedings, you will need to understand your options and the supplies you'll need.

### WAYS TO START

If you're considering incorporating blenderized foods into your child's diet, there are several ways to go about it.



Combine single-ingredient baby or pureed food with a prescribed amount of commercial formula

- OR -



Pair a blenderized tube-feeding diet with a prescribed amount of commercial formula

- OR -



Feed your child a full blenderized tube-feeding diet

**NOTE:** Starting your child on a blenderized tube-feeding diet should be gradual (over several weeks) to allow your child's system to better tolerate the change.



When additional nutrition is required or you're unable to blenderize your own meals, commercial formulas are available at home medical equipment (HME) suppliers, pharmacies, and select online and retail stores

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

As with any type of food preparation, having the right tools at hand will ensure a smooth transition to blenderized tube-feeding. Here are some must-haves.



- Heavy-duty blender
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Strainer
- Airtight storage containers
- Adequate refrigerator/freezer space
- Syringe with plunger
- Insulated bag or ice chest with ice packs for travel



Consulting with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) will help ensure your blenderized meals are meeting your child's nutritional needs and fluid requirements

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## KEEPING IT SAFE

Once you've gathered the correct tools for preparing your child's homemade blenderized tube-feeding (BTF), you'll want to learn more about safe preparation and storage techniques.

### SAFE PREP TIPS

Here are some best practices to follow when preparing your child's blenderized tube-feeding.



#### Wash Hands

- Wet your hands with running water
- Apply soap and create a lather by rubbing your hands together
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds
- Rinse your hands under running water
- Dry your hands



#### Prepare

- Make sure food prep area and equipment are clean
- Assemble required ingredients and equipment
- Avoid cross-contamination by using separate knives and cutting boards for fresh vegetables, raw meat, and seafood
- Thoroughly rinse and clean food ingredients
- Use a food thermometer to ensure meat, fish, and poultry are cooked to proper temperature



#### Blend

- Carefully follow measurements from recipe or meal plan
- Blend ingredients well enough to flow through feeding tube
- You may need to strain the blend to remove small chunks or seeds
- Aim for the consistency of your BTF to be similar to smooth pancake batter
- Divide blend into appropriate feeding volumes or amounts

### STORING YOUR BTF<sup>7,8</sup>

Your blenderized tube-feeding meal should be consumed immediately. Any unused portion should be discarded or stored. When storing, use an airtight container and place the remaining amount in the refrigerator or freezer within 2 hours of preparation. Here are a few other timelines for safe storage:



**SYRINGE OR PUMP**  
UP TO 2 HOURS<sup>1</sup>



**REFRIGERATE**  
UP TO 24 HOURS



**FREEZE**  
UP TO 3 MONTHS



Warm a blenderized meal that has been refrigerated by running it under warm water. Do not use a microwave, as it heats food unevenly



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