

“Risk Assessment of Patient’s Susceptibility to Infection”

1. Is the patient receiving enteral feeding at special risk of infection because they:

- Are being fed by a route that bypasses the stomach e.g. jejunostomy or
 - Have been prescribed gastric acid reducing therapy e.g. proton pump inhibitors or H₂ antagonists or
 - Are immunocompromised e.g. prescribed immunosuppressants, cytotoxics, long courses of corticosteroids etc or
 - Have had an organ transplant or
 - Are immunocompromised due to disease or
 - Have major injuries such as burns, multiple fractures
- Anderton, 2000

2. Is the patient being fed in hospital/nursing or residential home/school/day care centre?

YES (to either or both questions)

- A **new** oral/enteral or catheter tip syringe should be used **each** time the tube is flushed or the patient receives medication*
NOTE: *Sterile syringes must always be used for patients who have jejunostomy tubes or who are immunocompromised etc (See box 1)*
- Sterile water to be used for flushing (and as additional water if required)
NOTE: *A fresh bottle of sterile water should be opened **each** time water is required)*
- Non-sterile gloves and disposable apron to be worn during any manipulation of the feeding system
- Particular attention should be paid to hand hygiene. Hands should be thoroughly washed and dried before donning and after removal of gloves and aprons

NO

Is the patient being fed in their own home?

YES

Is the patient’s feed/feeding system being managed by the patient themselves or by a family member/carer?

YES

NO

Is the home environment, particularly kitchen, maintained in a hygienic condition?

YES

NO

Protective clothing (gloves and aprons) not required, but hands **must** be thoroughly washed and dried before assembling or manipulating system.

If health care workers are managing feed etc gloves (non-sterile) and aprons to be worn when assembling feeding system and for any subsequent manipulations.

Particular care must be given to hand hygiene. Hands should be thoroughly washed and dried before donning and after removal of gloves and aprons.

An oral/enteral/catheter tip syringe should be used for flushing tubing or administering medication*.

Syringes labelled by the manufacturer as “re-usable for single patient use” should be cleaned after each use and replaced as per manufacturer’s instructions.

Cooled boiled water, may be used for flushing (and as additional water as required).

Consider use of new oral/enteral or catheter tip syringe **each** time the tube is flushed or the patient receives medication*.

and

Replace cooled boiled water with “sterile water” for irrigation.

* Medicines should be measured using **oral** syringes and **not** hypodermic syringes