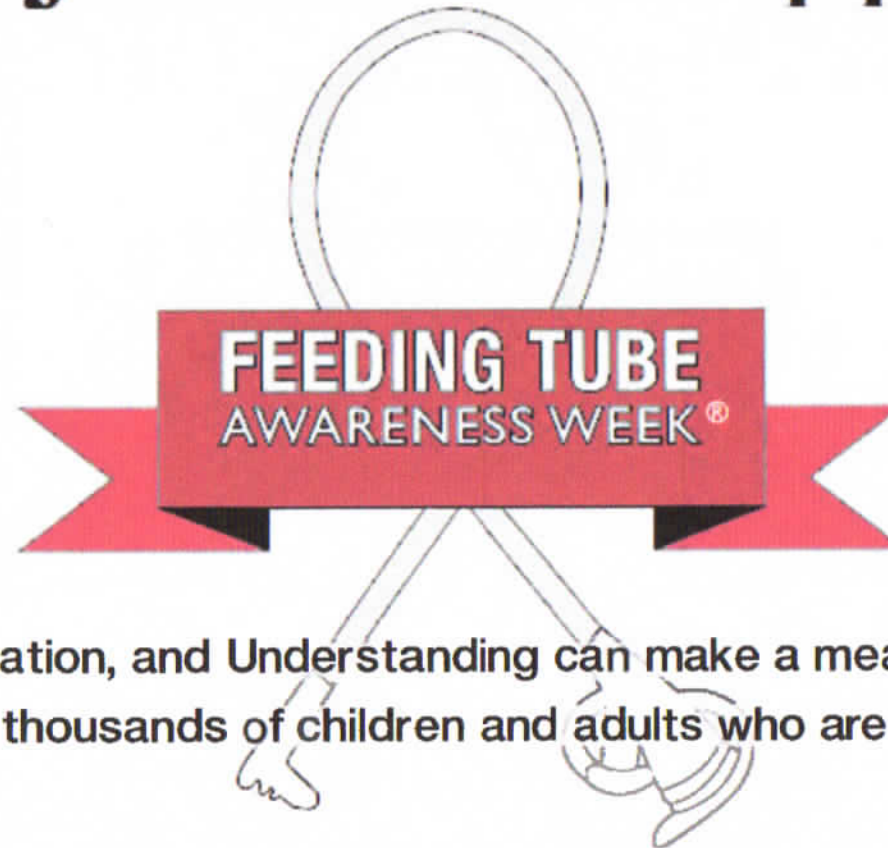


# Please Join Us in Supporting



Awareness, Education, and Understanding can make a meaningful difference to the hundreds of thousands of children and adults who are tube fed each year.

**Encourage Participation**

**February 4-8, 2019**

**Spread the Word**

 **FEEDING TUBE**  
AWARENESS FOUNDATION  
[www.feedingtubeawareness.org](http://www.feedingtubeawareness.org)

 **The Oley** Foundation  
*Help along the way*  
[www.oley.org](http://www.oley.org)

*We urge you to reach out to your local newspapers and TV stations with your stories about tube feeding during Feeding Tube Awareness Week.*

Tube feeding makes life possible, yet the general public is not likely to associate tube feeding with infants, children, and adults living their lives. Moreover, they are not likely to think of people who often look healthy as having a need for tube feeding. You have a compelling story to tell! The media interest is in the rarity of tube feeding, the conditions that require tube feeding, and the human interest aspect of families who go through great lengths to keep their family member as healthy as they can be. *What you share about you or your child is completely up to you.*

**Information about Feeding Tube Awareness Week to share:**

- The objective is to raise awareness of enteral/tube feeding as a positive and often life-saving medical intervention for those who are unable to eat and drink enough on their own to sustain life and thrive (and in the case of children, grow and develop). Further, we hope to break down the social stigma that is sometimes attached to tube feeding by highlighting the positive outcomes associated with it; giving more information about the reasons people require it; and countering stereotypes and misinformation about it.
- There are many tube feeding families out there; seeing a relatable story in the media may give them comfort, inspire them to action, and reduce feelings of isolation.
- Feeding Tube Awareness Foundation and the Oley Foundation are partnering in this effort to raise awareness.

**Tips from parents who have gotten media coverage:**

- Call your local newspaper or TV station and ask for the Health Editor. If this is a weekly feature or column, be sure to call in advance.
- When calling the media, be persistent. One parent called newspapers and TV stations. First one newspaper agreed to the story; in the end, the TV station did, too.
- Post an awareness video or request on the TV station's or newspaper's Facebook (or other social media) page.

**Some Information about Tube Feeding in Children and Adults:**

- Many medical conditions can impair a person's ability to eat or drink enough to sustain life, grow, and thrive.
- Tube feeding allows for proper nutrition and hydration while:
  - ◇ Children grow out of their condition/Adults recover from a procedure
  - ◇ Children and Adults grow stronger for medical procedures
  - ◇ Children and Adults battle their disease
  - ◇ Children and Adults find safe foods to eat
  - ◇ Children learn that food doesn't have to hurt them
  - ◇ Children and Adults learn how to swallow/eat safely
- Tube feeding is a life-saving and life-sustaining medical intervention.
- Tube feeding can be used as a supplement for Children and Adults who cannot eat on their own.
- Parents of tube-fed children are often thought of as not trying hard enough to feed their children, when often they have tried everything.
  - ◇ The most basic of instincts is to eat and to feed your child. When a child is tube fed, parents often feel like failures for not being able to nourish their child. Moreover, medical complications can be a challenge to navigate, making it even harder on parents.

Ultimately, what you share is up to you. If you need media support, please contact us ([metzgel@amc.edu](mailto:metzgel@amc.edu) or 518-262-5079). ***If you have a video or a link to media coverage to share, we'll do our best to post it on the Oley Foundation website or YouTube! Please send to Lisa at [metzgel@amc.edu](mailto:metzgel@amc.edu).***