

SUBJECT: Declogging Feeding Tubes with Pancreatic Enzyme (Viokase)

PURPOSE: To declog feeding tubes occluded with formula.

EQUIPMENT:

20ml syringe

Kit for unclogging feeding tube containing Pancrelipase and Sodium Bicarbonate Tablets (requires a physician's order) <sup>R3, R4</sup>

Lukewarm water

Small feeding tube	3.5F x 12"	H2768	}
	5F x 15"	H2769	}
	6F x 32"	H7776	}

(optional)

PROCEDURE:

1. Wash hands.
2. Attempt to withdraw as much formula as possible from the tube and discard.
3. Attempt to irrigate feeding tube with lukewarm water using a 20ml syringe.
4. If unsuccessful, obtain a kit for unclogging feeding tubes from Pharmacy that contains two Pancrelipase tablets (Viokase) and one 650mg Sodium Bicarbonate tablet. <sup>R3, R4, R6, R10</sup>
5. Crush the Pancrelipase and Sodium Bicarbonate tablets and mix together well. Add 5 to 15 ml of lukewarm water to the powder mixture and stir well.
6. Draw up mixture in a 20ml syringe.
7. Attach syringe to the end of the clogged tube.
8. Instill the slurry into the feeding tube using gentle pressure. If unable to instill mixture, try inserting a small feeding tube (e.g., 5F into 8F tube) as far as it will go and instill the mixture through it.
9. Clamp the tube for 15-30 minutes.
10. Draw up 20ml of lukewarm water and attach to the tube.
11. Irrigate the tube gently with the 20ml of water.
12. If unable to flush/unclog the tube, repeat steps 3-9. Procedure may be repeated up to three times.

PRECAUTIONS, CONSIDERATIONS, AND OBSERVATIONS:

1. Unclog feeding tubes within 24 hours of clogging. Flush feeding tubes with lukewarm water before and after intermittent feedings, medications, administration and gastric residual checks, or every 4 hours with continuous drip feedings. This is the most effective way to prevent tubes from clogging. <sup>R7, R8</sup> Recommended flushing volumes for adults are 20–60ml and children 15–30ml; however, if the patient is on a fluid restriction, a small flush volume may be necessary. This helps to prevent the mixture of acidic fluids with intact protein formulas, a primary cause of feeding tube occlusion. <sup>R1, R2, R7, R10</sup>

2. Beverages such as Coca-Cola, 7-Up or cranberry juice are acidic and may precipitate the caseinate in formulas. They are not recommended as flush fluids. <sup>R5, R9</sup>
3. Small tablet particles may block the tube. It is important to crush tablets to a fine powder before mixing with water. Consult Pharmacy on whether or not the medication can be dissolved.

#### RESEARCH REFERENCES:

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