

## Media Information

We encourage patients, parents and caregivers to reach out to their local newspapers and TV stations with their stories about tube feeding and Feeding Tube Awareness Week.

All tube feeders have compelling stories to share. Patients, parents and caregivers go through great lengths to get—or give—proper nutrition. 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. 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 overall objective of Feeding Tube Awareness Week is to help 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).
  - Moreover, we hope to break down the social stigma that is currently attached to tube feeding by:
    - Highlighting the positive outcomes associated with tube feeding
    - Giving more information about the reasons people require tube feeding
    - Countering stereotypes and misinformation about tube feeding
  - There are many tube feeding families out there; seeing a relatable story in the media may give them comfort and inspire them to action.
- Feeding Tube Awareness Foundation and the Oley Foundation are partnering to raise awareness of tube feeding through Feeding Tube Awareness Week.

Tips from parents who got media coverage last year:

- Last year we found that parents in smaller media markets had greater success with getting news coverage.
- Call your local newspaper or TV station and ask to speak to the Health Editor.
  - This parent was aware the paper only issued the Health section once a week, so she called in advance so they would have time.
- When calling the media, be persistent. One parent called newspapers and TV stations and 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:

- There are myriad medical conditions which 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:  
[supertubiemomma@gmail.com](mailto:supertubiemomma@gmail.com) (Traci Nagy, Feeding Tube Awareness Foundation) or  
[metzgel@mail.amc.edu](mailto:metzgel@mail.amc.edu) (Lisa Metzger, The Oley Foundation).