

REUSE OF FEEDING SYRINGES

Information for patients, parents and carers who use feeding syringes at home.

Which syringes will I use at home?

All syringes used to connect to a feeding tube are purple with EnFit connectors. The purple syringes supplied for home use are reusable for up to one week.

How do I wash my reusable syringes?

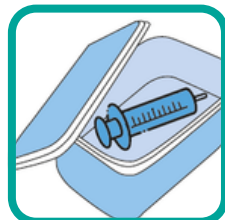
Clean your syringes as soon as possible after use to prevent the contents drying and sticking to the syringe.



1. Separate the syringe and plunger and wash in warm soapy water. Replace the plunger and use a push / pull action until clean.



2. Separate again and rinse thoroughly with cold tap water, ensuring there is no residue left in the syringe. Shake off any excess water and tap the tip of the syringe on a clean paper towel to ensure water is removed from tip of syringe.



For children over the age of one:

3. Let the syringe air dry whilst the plunger and dispenser are separated, then store in a clean open box once dry.

Do I need to sterilise my syringes?

- For neonates and babies under one year equipment must be sterilised.
- Sterilising is not usually required for older children over one year or adults unless it has been advised by your specialist healthcare team (please discuss this with your dietitian or community nursing team if you have any questions).

Sterilising method:

1. Fill your sterilising unit with cold tap water and add sterilising liquid or a sterilising tablet as per instructions on the packaging.
2. Fill a clean bowl with hot water with added domestic washing up liquid
3. Place the unclean syringe dispenser tip in the water and draw the plunger in and out several times until all traces of feed or medicine are removed.
4. Separate the two parts of the dispenser and wash in soapy water.
5. Rinse both parts under cold running water.
6. Place the washed syringe in the prepared sterilising unit.
7. Close the lid and submerge the items under water for a minimum of 15 minutes or until needed. Replace the sterilising fluid within the sterilising unit every 24 hours.
8. Reassemble the syringe prior to use.
9. Use a separate sterilising unit for each person's syringes.

How and when should I dispose of used syringes?

Used purple syringes can be disposed of in your normal household waste. Unfortunately, Norfolk and Suffolk county councils are unable to recycle clean plastic syringes.

You should dispose of syringes if:

- There is any sign of damage to the syringe or plunger seal.
- The dose markings have begun to rub off.
- The plunger becomes stiff to operate.
- You have been using the syringe for one week.



Note on dishwashers

Most syringe manufacturers advise against using a dishwasher.

Where do my syringes come from?

Syringes are usually supplied by your home enteral feeding delivery company along with feed and other equipment. Speak with your dietitian or community nursing service if you have any questions about your delivery.