

Other enteral-feeding complications

As described below, take steps to prevent infection at the tube insertion site and to manage patient agitation.

- **Infection at the insertion site of an abdominally placed tube.** Secure the tube to minimize movement and erosion at the site. Assess the site daily and cover it with a dry gauze dressing. Change the dressing daily or more often as needed for drainage or suspected infection. Monitor for redness and drainage at the site, and report these findings to the provider promptly.
- **Agitation.** Patients with traumatic brain injury or other cognitive deficits may become agitated by tube presence. To help prevent them from removing it, apply an abdominal binder, mitten restraints, or limb restraints as necessary. (Use the least restrictive method before resorting to limb restraints.) If an agitated patient is at risk for pulling out the tube, encourage family members to stay at the bedside to help distract their loved one. However, know that in some cases, their presence may increase agitation, not reduce it. Nonetheless, they may be able to tell you what techniques could help calm the patient. As indicated, take steps to provide a calm environment by dimming lights, playing soft music, and offering comfort, as appropriate.