**Enteral Therapy Via Tube**

**Description:**

Enteral nutrition therapy (commonly called tube feeding) is a form of nutrition administered into the gastrointestinal tract through a small catheter that may be temporary or permanent. The liquid nutritional formula may be administered by gravity, syringe, or infusion pump. The American Gastroenterological Association states that tube feeding should be considered reasonable and necessary for patients who cannot or will not eat, who have a functional digestive tract, and for whom a safe method of access is possible. Mechanical obstruction is the only absolute contraindication to enteral feeding.1

The use of enteral therapy may be on a short-term basis for acute conditions, or long-term for chronic conditions. Enteral therapy may be delivered via a nasogastric, nasoenteric, jejunostomy, or gastrostomy tube. The nutrient mixture is referred to as a diet that provides essential nutrients in a readily assimilated form requiring little or no active digestion and minimal residue. The standard formula selected for most patients is the isotonic polymeric formula, which meets the nutritional needs of most people.

Enteral nutrition is covered for a patient with a functioning gastrointestinal tract who cannot maintain weight and strength commensurate with his/her general condition due to an anatomical or motility disorder that prevents food from reaching the digestive tract. Examples of anatomical conditions include obstructions due to head and neck cancer, tumors, reconstructive surgery, or stricture of the esophagus or stomach. Examples of motility disorders include dysphagia following a stroke and neuromuscular diseases that interfere with the normal ability to chew and swallow.

Enteral nutrition is covered for patients with partial impairments such as Crohn's disease resulting with absorption problems, or a patient who can only swallow small amounts of food due to dysphagia where the gastrointestinal tract function is adequate and the enteral nutrition is the sole source. **Sole source** is defined as “the primary source of sufficient caloric/nutrient intake to achieve or maintain appropriate body weight.”

**Adult:** A total caloric intake of 20-35 calories per kilogram per day is considered sufficient to achieve or maintain appropriate body weight in most adults.

**Pediatric:** A sufficient caloric intake is essential in a pediatric patients to ensure proper growth and maintenance of body metabolism.

Estimated energy needs of pediatric patients:

1. infants 0-1 years of age require 90-120 calories per kilogram per day;
2. 1-7 years, 75-90 calories per kilogram per day;
3. 7-12 years, 60-75 calories per kilogram per day;
4. 12-18 years, 30-60 calories per kilogram per day;
5. older than 18 years should follow the adult recommendations of 20-35 calories per kilogram per day.

**Medical Criteria:**

Enteral nutrition therapy as the sole source of nutrition delivered through a feeding tube is covered for all product lines.

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Enteral formula must be prescribed by a physician for use by means of a nasogastric (NG), nasoenteric (NE), gastrostomy (G), or jejunostomy (J) tube.

Coverage:

Benefits may vary between groups/contracts. Please refer to the appropriate member certificate/subscriber agreement/RiTe Care contract for applicable "Medical Equipment, Medical Supplies and Prosthetic Devices" coverage/benefits.

The following are not covered:

1. products that are administered orally and related supplies
2. enteral products used as supplements to the patient's daily diet
3. baby food and other grocery items/products that can be blenderized and used with the enteral system
4. over-the-counter products (e.g., Boost, Ensure, Pediasure, Sustacal)

Note: Over-the-counter products (e.g., Boost, Ensure, Pediasure, Sustacal) are covered for BlueCHiP for RiTe Care members when prescribed by a physician.

Coding:

Claims are submitted with the HCPCS code that describes the enteral supplies (B4034-B4086), formula (B4102-4162), and pumps (B9000-B9002).

B4034, B4035, B4036, B4081, B4082, B4083, B4087, B4088

New Codes '08: B4087, B4088

Supplies:

The following codes are covered:

B4034 Enteral feeding supply kit; syringe, per day
B4035 Enteral feeding supply kit; pump fed, per day
B4036 Enteral feeding supply kit; gravity fed, per day
B4081 Nasogastric tubing with stylet
B4082 Nasogastric tubing without stylet
B4083 Stomach tube-levine type
B4087 Gastrostomy/jejunostomy tube, standard, any material, any type, each (New '08)
B4088 Gastrostomy/jejunostomy tube, low-profile, any material, any type, each (New '08)

Formula:

The following codes are non-covered for all product lines except Blue CHiP for RiTe Care as the formula is not administered via a tube:

B4102 Enteral formula, for adults, used to replace fluids and electrolytes (e.g., clear liquids), 500 ml = 1 unit
B4103 Enteral formula, for pediatrics, used to replace fluids and electrolytes (e.g., clear liquids), 500 ml = 1 unit
B4104 Additive for enteral formula (e.g., fiber)

The following codes are covered as the formula is administered via a tube:
B4149 Enteral formula, blenderized natural foods with intact nutrients, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4150 Enteral formula, nutritionally complete with intact nutrients, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4152 Enteral formula, nutritionally complete, calorically dense (equal to or greater than 1.5 kcal/ml) with intact nutrients, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4153 Enteral formula, nutritionally complete, hydrolyzed proteins (amino acids and peptide chain), includes fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4154 Enteral formula, nutritionally complete, for special metabolic needs, excludes inherited disease of metabolism, includes altered composition of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and/or minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4155 Enteral formula, nutritionally incomplete/modular nutrients, includes specific nutrients, carbohydrates (e.g. glucose polymers), proteins/amino acids (e.g., glutamine, arginine), fat (e.g. medium chain triglycerides) or combination, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4157 Enteral formula, nutritionally complete, for special metabolic needs for inherited disease of metabolism, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4158 Enteral formula, for pediatrics, nutritionally complete with intact nutrients, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber and/or iron, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4159 Enteral formula, for pediatrics, nutritionally complete soy based with intact nutrients, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber and/or iron, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4160 Enteral formula, for pediatrics, nutritionally complete calorically dense (equal to or greater than 0.7 kcal/ml) with intact nutrients, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4161 Enteral formula, for pediatrics, hydrolyzed/amino acids and peptide chain proteins, includes fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

B4162 Enteral formula, for pediatrics, special metabolic needs for inherited disease of metabolism, includes proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, may include fiber, administered through an enteral feeding tube, 100 calories = 1 unit

**Pumps:**

The following codes are covered:

B9000 Enteral nutrition infusion pump - without alarm
B9002 Enteral nutrition infusion pump - with alarm

**Related topics:**

Oral Enteral Nutrition Mandate
References:


Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association Medical Policy Reference Manual, Policy 1.02.01

Total Parenteral Nutrition and Enteral Nutrition in the Home, 1:2003

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