**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) R3, R4
- Lukewarm water
- Small feeding tube 3.5F x 12” H2768
- 5F x 15” H2769 (optional)
- 6F x 32” H7776

**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. R3, R4, R6, R10
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. R7, R8 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. R1, R2, R7, R10
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. R5, R9

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:

LITERATURE REFERENCES: