Feeding Tubes in Adults With Advanced Illness: Use, Overuse, and the SLP’s Role

INTRODUCTION

Studies on feeding tubes in individuals with advanced illness, particularly dementia, have raised doubts about the long-term benefit and potential overuse of feeding tubes. SLPs are often asked to offer recommendations about a person’s ability to eat and drink by mouth but may be concerned that restrictions on oral intake could lead to the use of feeding tubes. The boundaries of professional roles are often blurred, further complicating the issue. This course addresses the clinical research surrounding the use of feeding tubes, offers evidence-based practice guidelines, and provides solutions to the challenges facing SLPs with regards to feeding tube overuse.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

You will be able to:

• list factors that contribute to the rapid growth of feeding tubes in individuals with advanced illness, particularly dementia, and conditions for which feeding tubes have and have not been shown to be effective
• utilize effective strategies to overcome the challenge of feeding tube overuse
• describe the role of SLPs in decision-making about gastrostomy tubes and feeding
• suggest alternatives to feeding tubes for individuals who are at high risk for dysphagia and aspiration but with a goal of comfort feeding and no tube

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PROGRAM HISTORY and IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Live webinar date: September 20, 2016
Peer reviewed: June 5, 2017; January 9, 2020
End date: June 6, 2025

To earn continuing education credit, you must complete and submit the learning assessment on or before June 6, 2025.
This course is offered for 0.2 ASHA CEUs (Intermediate level, Professional area).