

Characteristics of Patients Receiving Home Enteral Nutrition

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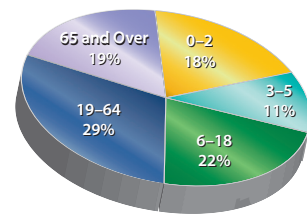
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Introduction

Limited data exists on the home care tube feeding patient population. Healthcare professionals may not always be aware that receiving tube feeding in the home is a viable option for many patients compared to a protracted admission in an acute care, rehabilitation facility or a nursing home. One national home tube feeding company analyzed patient data to determine the types of patients who most often receive tube feeding at home.

Results

Home Tube Feeding Patient Age and Sex



	Male	Female
0-2 years old	55%	45%
3-5 years old	55%	45%
6-18 years old	54%	46%
19-64 years old	57%	43%
65 and older	57%	43%

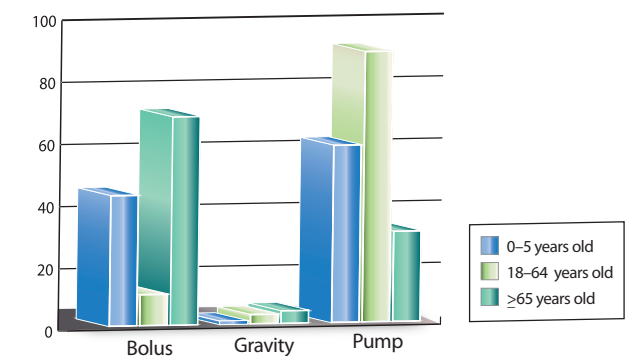
Top Diagnosis by Age

The most common diagnoses in our pediatric patients, 0-18 years of age, are failure to thrive, esophageal reflux, feeding difficulties and cerebral palsy, while in the adult patients dysphagia is the leading diagnosis.

0-2 Years Old	3-5 Years Old	6-18 Years Old	19-64 Years Old	65 and Older
Esophageal Reflux, 530.81	Failure to Thrive, 783.41	Cerebral Palsy, 343.9	Dysphagia, 787.20	Dysphagia, 787.20
Failure to Thrive, 783.41	Feeding Difficulties, 783.3	Failure to Thrive, 783.41	Cerebral Palsy, 343.9	CVA, 436
Feeding Difficulties, 783.3	Dysphagia, 787.20	Esophageal Reflux, 530.81	Head and Neck Cancer, 195.0	Esophageal Cancer, 150.9

Method of Feeding

The majority of our patients who are under the age of 65 are pump fed, while the majority of our patients age 65 or older are fed via the bolus (syringe) method. The gravity feeding method constitutes the smallest population of patients in each age group.



Methods

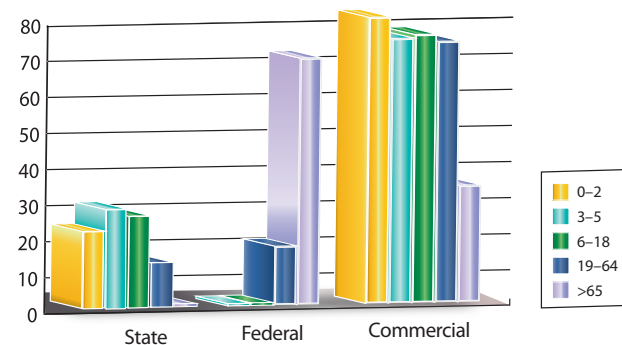
A national home tube feeding company collected demographic and prescription data on more than 10,000 patients serviced from January to December of 2009.

Patient Demographic and Prescription Data Evaluated

- Age
- Sex
- Insurance
- Primary diagnosis
- Feeding method
- Formula type

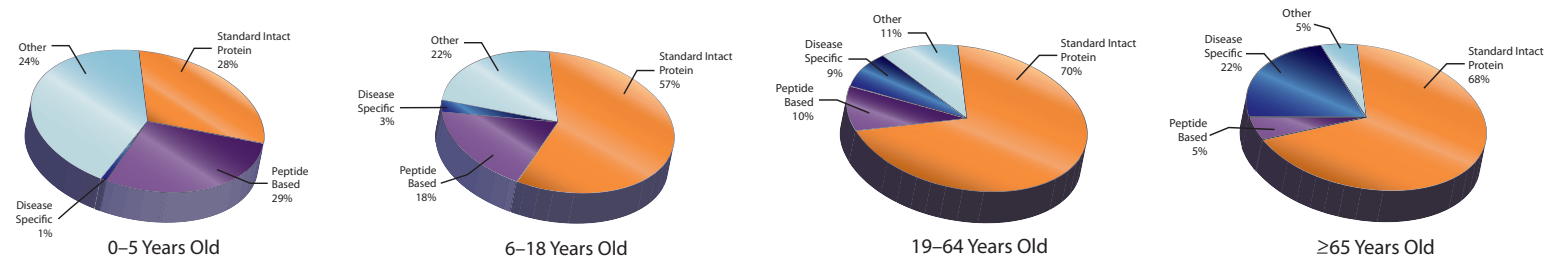
Insurance Coverage by Age

- 70 percent of patients younger than age 65 have commercial insurance
 - 20-30 percent of patients at age 18 or younger have state Medicaid
 - 15 percent of patients at ages 19-64 have state Medicaid
- 70 percent of patients at age 65 or older have Medicare Part B



Formula Type by Age Group

Patients at age 5 or younger are prescribed formula listed as the "other category" 42 percent of the time. This category includes metabolic formulas, modulators and thickeners. Standard intact protein formulas are most commonly prescribed in the population of patients at age 6 or older.



Conclusion

This data demonstrates that patients receiving tube feeding in the home care setting vary in age group, diagnosis, and insurance provider. The 18 and under demographic comprised 51 percent of our patient population in 2009. Commercial insurance is most often utilized by those less than 65 years of age, and Medicare by those 65 and older. More disease-specific formulas are used in the age 65- and older group. This could be due to the growing number of elderly tube fed patients with poorly controlled blood sugar and renal disease necessitating diet restrictions in their formula. Further studies are needed to discern which disease-specific formulas are being prescribed in that age group. Gravity is the least prescribed feeding method. This may be due to a lack of awareness by the acute care team of its availability in the home care setting. Gravity feeds are not commonly prescribed in the hospital, and patients often transition home on the regimen they were on in the hospital. It is interesting to note that across all age groups, males outnumber females in our population. More research is needed to determine why.