There are big changes coming to enteral feeding in the near future. The Feeding Tube Awareness Foundation is in close communication with the Global Enteral Device Supplier Association (GEDSA), which is the organization responsible for facilitating the changes. We are sharing what we have learned and we will update you as more information comes out. Having other people make changes to the way we feed our children can be scary, but don’t panic!

**WHY:**
First, let's go over why the changes are being made. One only need glance through [this article about horrifying real-life examples of medical devices being connected to the wrong tubing](http://www.feedingtubeawareness.org/ENFitUpdateJan15.pdf) in order to understand why change to medical connections is a good thing. The examples given in that article are incredibly disturbing. While it is hard to believe that medical professionals with any level of competency could make some of those mistakes, others are not so difficult to believe and illustrate the need for incompatibility between devices that are not meant to be connected to each other, such as IV tubing and feeding pumps, or trachs and feeding pumps. (and the one about the NG tube being connected to the Foley catheter is just gross.) **Bottom line: enteral devices need to be compatible ONLY with enteral devices to avoid harmful and potentially fatal misconnections.**

**WHAT:**
Beginning in Q1 2015, a transition to the new ENFit connections will begin to roll out in phases. It will be a slow process, which will help keep things running smoothly. There have already been many changes made to the timeline, which I feel is an indicator that the process is being done carefully so that the transition will be a smooth one. (There will be no changes to the actual low-profile G, GJ and J tube buttons.)

(*Note: I am using the terminology used by GEDSA at [www.stayconnected2014.org](http://www.stayconnected2014.org)*)
The first phase of the transition will include the administration sets changing from the current Christmas tree plugs to the new ENFit connectors. These are some of the current connections that we are all familiar with:

L: Kangaroo Joey administration set with MIC-KEY single port extension  
R: MOOG EnteraLite Infinity administration set with AMT Y port extension

In place of the purple and red administration set connectors in the above picture will be the new ENFit administration connector. This is a generic example of what the new ENFit administration connector will look like:
In the first phase of the transition, administration sets (i.e. feeding pump bag plugs) will be changed to the new ENFit connector, like the above picture, and will include an adapter. The adapter will twist onto the ENFit administration set and will be a temporary feature that will only be included until the final phase of the transition. At that time, the adapters won't be necessary anymore.

This is a generic example of what the first phase (new ENFit pump bag plug + adapter) will look like:

Many people have expressed concern that the transition will make their current supplies unusable and we want to reassure everyone that this is not the case. The adapter piece will make it possible to use new ENFit administration sets with any extension sets you already have on hand, as well as nasal tubes. Here's what that will look like:

Having said all that, these adapters will only be a temporary item. During the transition period, each administration set will come with an adapter. Once the final phase of the transition is complete, adapters will not be issued along with the administration sets anymore. (Reading between the lines, if you have a stockpile of the current extension tubes and are concerned that you won't use all of them before the final transition takes place, it wouldn't be a bad idea to save a few of the adapters so that your supplies don't go to waste.) If you do have a large stockpile, it's time to start moving through it, whether that means using the supplies yourself or sharing them with other people through non-profits and supply exchanges.
In the next phase of the transition, new ENFit syringes will be introduced. During the transition phase, syringes will also have adapters so that they can continue to be used with the current feeding tube connectors. I don't have any samples of ENFit syringes so there are no pictures, but they will come in a variety of sizes just like the syringes that are currently available. Be aware that once the transition is complete, cath tip, oral/slip tip, and Luer tip syringes will NOT be compatible with the new ENFit connections so you will not be able to use them. (believe me, I have tried and they don't fit) Many have expressed concerns about the availability of ENFit O ring syringes for blended diets. We know there will be adapters available that will allow you to use any you currently have on hand. We do not know yet exactly how the distribution of medication syringes will be handled. We have not heard for sure if any manufacturer is developing ENFit-compatible medication adapter caps but we anticipate that it will happen.

The final phase of the transition will be when the feeding tube connectors change to ENFit connectors. At that point, the temporary adapters will be discontinued. This is a generic example of what the ENFit feeding tube connectors will look like:

![ENFit Connector Example](image1.jpg)

And here are both ends of the new ENFit connections side by side, with the feeding tube end on the left and the administration set end on the right, and how they look when connected:

![ENFit Connection Example](image2.jpg)
Our friends at Nestle’ were kind enough to show us some prototypes of their new ENFit feeding tubes. The top one is an NG tube and the bottom one is a PEG-type G tube:

Over the years, we have had problems with things like NG tube ports stretching and caps not staying closed, med ports popping open overnight and feeding the bed, leaking from extension tubes without caps, feed sets disconnecting from extensions or NG tubes during feeds, and syringes popping out of extension tubes during bolus feeds. No product is perfect and I imagine that over time, those of us who use these products daily will find their flaws, but overall I think the new connections will eliminate many of the common problems we currently have with connections. The new, more secure connections may require more precautions to be taken to prevent the tubes from being pulled out, so that is something to keep in mind as the changes come.

GEDSA has been very receptive throughout the process to concerns and questions from consumers. One of those concerns is whether or not the use of blenderized diet will still be possible due to the sizes of the openings in the new connectors. You can see here that the inner diameter of the new connection is the same size as the inner diameter of both the Infinity and the Joey connectors:
GEDSA's website does say that the use of an adapter with a syringe during the transition phase could result in a slightly smaller hole, but that as long as the hole in the extension tube is the smallest hole, the flow of formula should not be impacted. Keep in mind that the size of the hole in the actual feeding tube (G, GJ, J, and NG) will not change, nor will the size of the connector that connects the extension tube to the button for low-profile tubes, so if it works now, it will still work with the new connectors. The same goes for venting with the new ENFit syringes. The principle will still be the same: pull the plunger out of the syringe, connect to an extension tube, connect the extension tube to the button, and vent. *The only difference will be the way the extension tube and syringe fit together.*

Another concern that has been expressed is from those who currently use non-enteral products for enteral purposes, such as the use of catheter bags to drain the G port of a GJ tube. Manufacturers are aware of the need for an enteral drainage device and we hope to see the release of such a product in the near future. We have confirmed with Corpak that the Farrell Valve bags will have ENFit connectors, so that will continue to be a venting option for those who currently use them.

**HOW DO WE PREPARE:**

These are the recommendations from GEDSA:
1. Learn about the products that are changing
2. Understand the transition to the new connectors
3. Have the right products on hand
   - Use up existing products and do not buy more than you need
   - Transition as soon as possible
   - Use the products only as directed

(Source: [Transition Checklist for Patients and Caregivers](#))

**TIMELINE:**

The current timeline for the transition is this:
- Q1 2015: ENFit administration sets with adapter available
- Q2 2015: ENFit syringes available
- Q3 2015: ENFit feeding tubes available
- Q1 2016: Transition to ENFit connectors will be complete

This timeline could change, but this is what we should be expecting to see. Now is the time to start talking to your supplier about the changes, take inventory of the supplies you have on hand, and think about letting some of them go if you have a large stockpile. At this point, we don’t know exactly what each manufacturer’s new ENFit supplies will look like, but we hope to see more of that information soon and will share it when we get it.

**CONCLUSION:**

Yes, there will be changes. Yes, there will be some adjustment required of all of us, and yes, there will probably be some aches and pains associated as we all adapt to our new supplies. However, the transition process has been planned carefully and we all need to try to embrace these changes and be optimistic! *DON’T PANIC!* Remember that the final objective is to make all of these products *safer* by eliminating the possibility of accidental misconnections that could seriously injure or kill our loved ones who depend on medical devices.

**For more information:**

The latest information on this transition can be found at GEDSA’s website, [www.stayconnected2014.org](http://www.stayconnected2014.org). We will also continue to post updates on this transition at [www.feedingtubeawareness.org](http://www.feedingtubeawareness.org) and on our Facebook page at [https://www.facebook.com/FeedingTubeAwareness](https://www.facebook.com/FeedingTubeAwareness).