BSNA Position Statement

The Use of Blended Diet with Enteral Feeding Tubes Practice Toolkit (2026)

The British Specialist Nutrition Association (BSNA) acknowledges that dietitians are increasingly involved in managing home enteral tube feeding patients using some form of homemade blended food, either exclusively or in combination with commercial enteral formulas.[1]

Commercial enteral feeds are designed and tested to be nutritionally adequate, consistent in composition and to support clinical outcomes. All pumps and associated equipment are tested with commercial enteral feeds.

BSNA recommends that any patient or carer wishing to administer a blended diet, whether by syringe or via their enteral feeding pump, should do so following a shared decision-making approach with a qualified healthcare professional. This supports patient preference whilst minimising any associated clinical, practical or safety risks regarding consistency, nutritional adequacy, and the potential for tube blockage.

In line with the British Dietetic Association (BDA) Practice Toolkit: The Use of Blended Diet with Enteral Feeding Tubes[1], in circumstances where a patient, guardian or carer chooses to opt for a blended diet enteral tube feed, it is the responsibility of the managing healthcare professional to advise them and agree what is needed to support the person's choice safely. This advice should also align with local NHS Trust, Integrated Care Board (ICB) or Health Boards policies.

NICE guidance (CG139) focuses on infection prevention and recommends the use of pre-packaged, ready-to-use enteral feeds where possible[2], but does not provide explicit guidance on the use of blended diets. In the absence of NICE-specific recommendations, UK professional guidance such as the BDA Practice Toolkit is commonly referenced to support evidence-informed practice.

In addition to standard feeds, some enteral feeding devices may be compatible with blended diets, but only under the guidance of a healthcare professional. The EPSG recommends always consulting the device Instructions for Use (IFU) or manufacturer guidance to ensure safe and appropriate use. When determining the composition and volume of nutrition, it is important to recognise that all enteral feeding devices share a common limiting factor: the ENFit connection system and feed set design, which may restrict viscosity, flow rate, and particle size.

1. S. Durnan, et al (2026) The Use of Blended Diet with Enteral Feeding Tubes Practice Toolkit (2026). British Dietetic Association and BAPEN

2. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). CG139 *Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control* (2012, updated 2017), Recommendation 1.3.2.1.

About the British Specialist Nutrition Association

BSNA is the trade association representing manufacturers of products designed to meet the particular nutritional needs of individuals; including specialist products for infants and young children (including infant formula, follow-on formula, young child formula and complementary foods), medical nutrition products for diseases, disorders and medical conditions, including oral nutritional supplements, enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition, as well as companies who aseptically compound chemotherapy, parenteral nutrition and CIVAS. BSNA also represents the Enteral Products Safety Group (EPSG)* as Associate Members.

The following Medical Nutrition companies are members of BSNA: Abbott; AYMES; Fresenius Kabi; Mead Johnson; Nestlé Nutrition and Health; Nualtra; Nutricia; Nutrinovo; Vitaflo.

*The EPSG represents UK enteral feeding devices suppliers. The following companies are members of the EPSG: Abbott; Avanos, Cardinal Health; Fresenius Kabi; Kebomed; Nestlé Nutrition and Health **; Nutricia; Vygon.

** Nestlé Nutrition and Health is a member of EPSG but does not supply feeding tubes, giving sets, or syringe.

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