

Handbook of Drug Administration via Enteral Feeding Tubes

White R, Bradnam V. Pharmaceutical Press, London (UK), 2007. 569 pages.

The publisher of this text describes it as “a practical guide to the safe administration of medicines via enteral feeding tubes”. To inform the reader about the topic, the text begins with 10 chapters outlining types of feeding tubes, maintenance of tube patency, implications for drug delivery, and methods of converting dosage formulations for tube administration.

The authors and reviewers are all from England, which reflects the source of inspiration for the book, the British Pharmaceutical Nutrition Group. The intended audience consists of nurses and pharmacists in the United Kingdom, and as such, the content is based on pharmaceutical dosage forms and treatment practices in that country. The chapter dealing with the legal consequences of drug administration through enteral feeding tubes is largely irrelevant to Canadian practitioners. The chapter on risk management is brief, but identifies the key concerns. The description of various syringes and ports is limited and does not address any unique requirements of feeding tubes used with neonates. All chapters have a limited number of references to support the content, but those listed do appear relevant to the points illustrated.

Most of the remaining text consists of 344 monographs containing recommendations on methods of administering available (in the United Kingdom) dosage forms through

enteral feeding tubes. Each monograph contains the following sections: formulations available, site of absorption, alternative routes available, interactions, health and safety concerns, method for intragastric administration, method for intrajejeunal administration, and supporting references. However, for many of the 344 drugs, such information is unavailable, and this lack is apparent in the monograph content. For most of the monographs, the methods of intragastric and intrajejeunal administration are identical. Not all dosage formulations discussed are available in Canada. However, this reviewer found that the recommendations for administering proton pump inhibitors, fluoroquinolones, and phenytoin (selected as representative sampling) reflected appropriate methods.

The unique aspect of this text is its compilation of all information relevant to administration of drugs through enteral feeding tubes in a single volume. For the reader who is frequently searching for available information on this method of drug administration, this text provides a single source for the limited information available. This reviewer is unaware of an alternative single source of comparable information for Canadian pharmacists.

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