



# 7 Reasons

To Free Your Child  
From The Feeding Tube

**notube**

<https://www.notube.com>



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Peter Scheer, M.D., M.B.A., is a board certified pediatrician and an internationally recognized expert on behavioral feeding disorders, including feeding tube dependency. Dr. Scheer graduated with honors from the Medical University of Vienna, Austria. He is also a trained psychotherapist and psychoanalyst, which gives him insight into the true causes for tube dependency in our young patients.

Dr. Scheer gained much of his experience in the Psychosomatic Division at the University Clinic for Children and Adolescents in Graz, Austria, which he led for more than 26 years. Before joining the Psychosomatic Unit, he was a flight emergency doctor with air ambulances in East Africa. He is a distinguished professor at the Medical University Graz, where he teaches courses in feeding disorders. Together with his wife, Marguerite Dunitz-Scheer, M.D., over the course of his career, he has helped wean more than 3000 children from the feeding tube. As a father of five, Dr. Scheer understands both the medical and emotional viewpoints parents of tube-fed children face.

### Selected Achievements And Memberships

- Founding member, German Association of Infant Mental Health (GAIMH)
- Teaching analyst, Austrian Medical Association
- Elected member, Royal Society of Medicine (the world's most prestigious medical society)
- Former member, Executive Council of the Austrian Pediatric Society
- Management trainer, Vienna University of Science and Economics
- Recipient of the Great Medal of Honour by the Governor of Styria, Austria
- Recipient of the Austrian Honorary Cross for Science and Arts as named by the Austrian President

## notube

NoTube changes the way children with a feeding tube live their lives. Currently, more than half of children with a feeding tube and their families experience significant negative side effects. The therapeutic experts at NoTube have developed a unique solution to help these children overcome the need for a feeding tube. In several online and on-site programs, children learn how to eat independently until ultimately, the feeding tube can be safely removed. In the last five years, NoTube's experts have helped wean more than 350 children with a success rate of 90 percent; in the last three decades, we've helped more than 3000 children become tube-free.

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### AS SEEN ON



## **OUR PROGRAMS**

We've designed each of our programs to help you teach your child to eat whether they're tube dependent or a picky eater.



### **Netcoaching**

Receive daily personal coaching from our leading tube weaning experts who will help you teach your child to eat without a feeding tube right from the comfort of your home. In this internet-based program, you and your family are able to stay at home while our team of experts works with you via our online coaching platform. To date, more than 200 children have participated in this very program and over 90% have been fully weaned off the tube.



### **Eating Schools**

Interact in-person with our complete therapy team and other families in a 2-week intensive course that teaches your child to eat without a feeding tube while receiving support online before and thereafter. We offer our Eating Schools at several locations worldwide to make it as accessible as possible to families like yours.



### **Learn To Eat**

Experience professional medical and therapeutic support on a month-by-month basis using our online platform as you help build your child's eating skills while staying in your familiar environment. In this program, we work with a variety of early infant feeding disorders such as picky eating, infantile anorexia, feeding disorders related to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and others. Our goal is to dramatically improve your child's openness towards a wide variety of foods and increase the daily intake of different foods in the long-term.



### **Play Picnics**

Get a sneak peak into how our medical team teaches children to eat on their own in these relaxed, fun picnics, held in cities across Europe. Play Picnics are a specific group therapy based on the "Graz Model of tube weaning" that aim to support tube dependent and children with other early eating behavior disorders to make the transition from enteral to oral nutrition and to extend their eating skills.



### **Home Visits**

The ultimate in personalized in-home medical guidance for teaching your child to eat where members of our team join your family for intensive multi-day therapy.

[Which program is right for my child? \[ View our program comparison grid \]](#)



# 7 Reasons To Free Your Child From The Feeding Tube

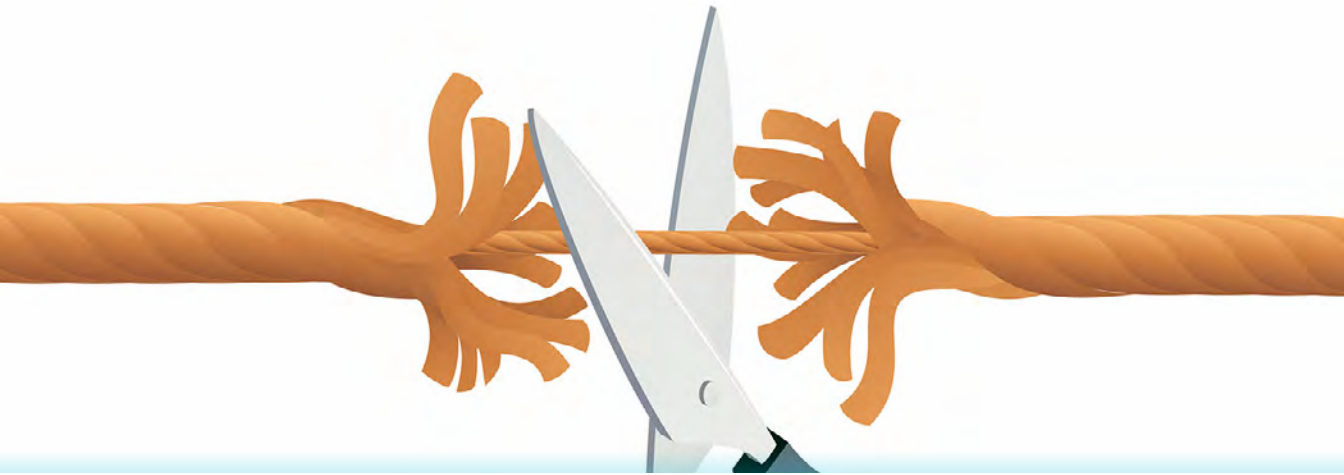
Why tube weaning is necessary as soon as medically possible

## Unnecessary tube feeding is like a walking stick.

As leading experts in the transition from enteral to oral feeding, we support parents, children, and the whole family in the process. We are convinced that tubes placed for the sake of temporary weight gain ultimately limit your child and should not become their fate — medically unnecessary tube feeding is like getting a walking stick after breaking your leg. If used too long, the stick becomes more of a comfort than necessary and assistive, and the habit is hard to break. It's the patient's physician's or physiotherapist's role to advise trying to live without the stick. The transition process will be full of fear: fear of falling, fear of breaking one's leg again, and fear of being unable to move, but once the transition is complete, life becomes more full.



The same is true of an unnecessary feeding tube. It hinders the development of the child; it hinders the social contacts of families; and it hinders social interaction and intelligence. A feeding tube keeps your child from visiting a restaurant, going on holidays, or spending the night with grandparents and friends. Furthermore, it leads to unintended side effects like choking, vomiting, and retching. These painful side effects lead to nausea and gagging, which make food experiences unpleasant. Ultimately, unnecessary tube feeding hinders children of all ages from exploring with their mouths the way they normally would. Exploring with their mouths allows children from an early age on to know how everything tastes: from cords to bread to sand to ice cream. Additionally, it allows the viruses and bacteria that live on all these surfaces to build up, ultimately strengthening the child's [microbiome](#), which is the pool of enteral germs that every mammal has and needs for digestion and immunity.



## 1. It's Necessary To Tube Wean As Soon As Possible

Tube weaning should be prioritized because the longer your child is on a tube, the more likely it will be to forget how to eat, how to chew, and how to swallow (if it has not happened already). Every day weaning is delayed is a lost day, and even you as parent will start to depend on the tube, ultimately making weaning more difficult.

It is also necessary to wean as soon as possible because smelling, licking, chewing, eating, and swallowing are important ways we interact with the world. Unnecessary tube feeding makes that impossible. The longer the tube is used as support, the more emotionally attached and dependent the child becomes.



The sad bacteria we create with tube feeding.

## 2. Tube Feeding Inhibits Your Child's Immunity & Microbiome Systems From Developing Adequately

The formula used for tube feeding is medically proven and supported by research to be nutritionally acceptable. Nevertheless, it is not even close to “real” food. It does not smell pleasant, it does not taste yummy, and it is not appealing. It is tolerated only because the patient does not know better. With tube feeding, the joys of eating, the skills of smelling, licking, tasting, chewing, and swallowing food are not learned, and nutrients get lost. By reducing the possibility to ingest germs — especially good bacteria that nestle in the gut — adequate absorption ability, absorption of some vitamins are reduced, and immunity does not thrive to expected levels. Furthermore, because formula can't be broken down chemically the same way real food is, the ability to digest proteins and break them into amino acids is not learned. Other unintended side effects of enteral feeding — vomiting, retching, sleep disturbances, and diarrhea — show just how limiting medically unnecessary tube feeding can be. Tube feeding makes the child feel physically worse than necessary and puts a heavy burden on you as parents. You can read more about those unintended effects and their consequences in our [e-book](#).



*By reducing the possibility to ingest germs — especially good bacteria that nestle in the gut — adequate absorption ability, absorption of some vitamins are reduced, and immunity does not thrive to expected levels.*

### 3. Tube Feeding Contributes To Isolation

When your child is hooked on a tube, many normal aspects of life are impossible.

- **It's nearly impossible to let other people care for your child.**

Babysitters, au pairs, and even grandparents likely won't feel that they are able to properly take care of a child with a tube.

- **Visiting friends with a tube-fed child is difficult.**

Friends may ask questions, offer help, and discuss alternative medicine — ideas parents have already thought of and tried.

- **Siblings of children with feeding tubes may be affected.**

They may feel uneasy or scared by their sibling's illness or jealous that their sibling needs and receives nearly all of the parents' attention. They may flip between guilt and anger or between wanting to help and wishing to get rid of their sibling. Sometimes, the healthy child is neglected and shows signs of emotional disturbances. Other times, the child will become ill in order to get the parents attention.

- **Tube-dependent children face stigma.**

If you leave the house for more than three to four hours, you must carry tube formula and pumps with you. Wherever you go, people may look at your child and make remarks like, "What is wrong your child?" "Have you tried this or that?" or "Why is your child still tube fed?". It's hard for parents to respond to these questions, and the responses become frustrating after a while, especially because most parents don't know why their child is still hooked on the tube. These questions and the food delivery problems aggregate when families attempt to go on holiday.

- **Tube-dependent children and their families must deal with uncomfortable physical side effects.**

For example, a tube-dependent child may vomit six to ten times a day. In a hotel room, this is unbearable. When a tube is connected to the drip during the night, children tend to wake up frequently because their bodies are not prepared to eat while sleeping, so digestion and [motility](#) are slow. When formula intake exceeds the bowels' ability to digest, the child wakes up crying and sometimes vomiting. Most hotels wouldn't tolerate that, even if you were prepared to.



### 4. Tube Feeding Reduces The Ability To Learn

Tube feeding is used to help otherwise helpless children ingest food. Because tube formula contains everything nutritionally required, parents and doctors think they are doing what is in the best interest of the child. However, research has shown that transitioning to oral feeding enhances development even when weight loss occurs. You can read about it [here](#). This finding is striking, and it contradicts many pediatricians' beliefs because it means that the possibility of spending time eating and drinking with others, not only the amount of calories ingested, impacts development. For tube-fed children, the favorable side-effects of eating will be missing, including new experiences that come through tasting food and sustaining oneself through eating. Additionally, eating makes the world more lively: children can attend sleepovers, they can spend more time with friends, and they will be able to join their peers everywhere.





## 5. Tube Dependency Affects Both Children and Parents

After their child is hooked on the tube, parents tend to rely on its favorable effects as much as their children do. You may have undergone a lot of stress with a child who has spent a considerable time in the NICU or who underwent potentially life-threatening operations, and nutritionists and pediatricians told you that your child's only ongoing measure needed to be the feeding tube. Perhaps you took problems like vomiting less seriously because you were so happy the child survived that you did not object to any less-severe burden.

In the end, you've been required to become your child's medical personnel at home. You know what to do in case of emergency, you are trained in resuscitation, and you were fine to do all of these things as long as your child is alive. Being able to measure your child's intake, being certain the child got enough formula, and seeing them grow and thrive was the best you expected. To change that, or to oppose the doctor who became part of your family's life-saving system is unpleasant. Sometimes, you may feel like you're betraying your biggest advocates by opposing doctors and beginning tube weaning with an outside team. Maybe bad-tasting, bitter medication has created an unpleasant situation for your entire family, and the tube seemingly solves all of these problems. For all of these reasons, parents become as mentally and emotionally hooked on the tube as their children are. We understand, and we can help you through this transition.



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## 6. Tubes Reduce The Child's Ability To Have Fun

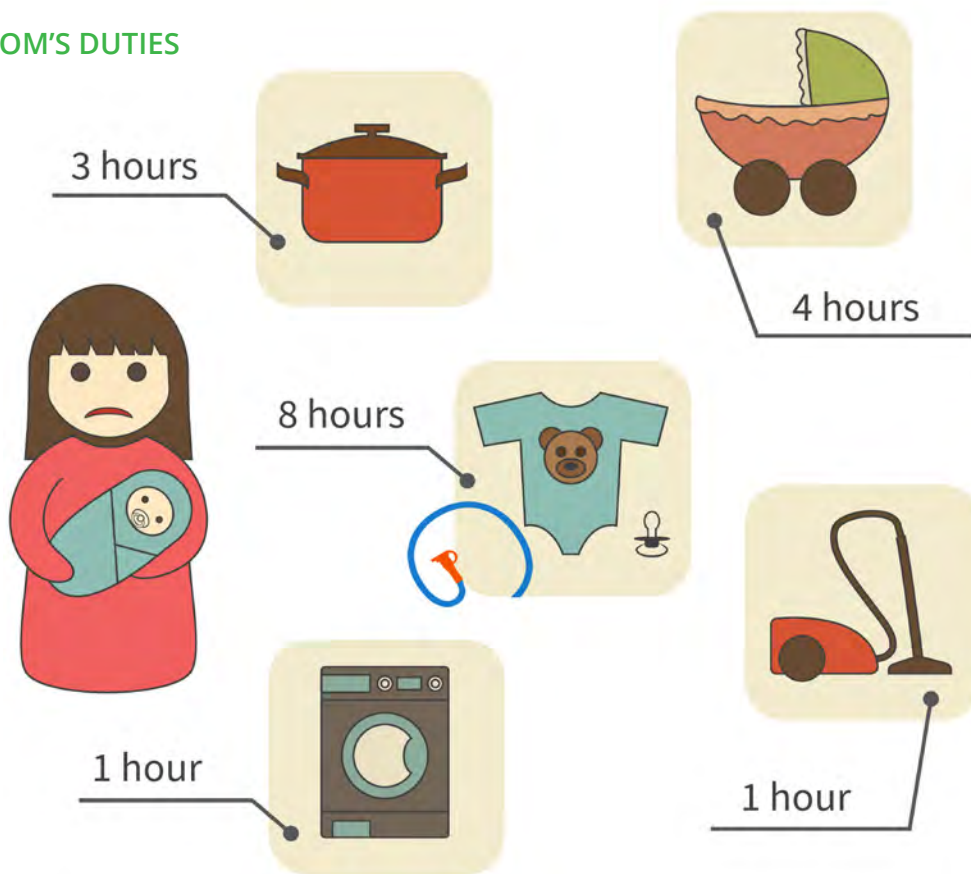
Eating is fun. Every animal knows that. Even more, it's a ritual human beings share with their friends — this is why we love to eat together. A shared meal makes relationships easier. However, a child who is unable to eat can't participate in this bonding experience. Parents feeding their child before a meal cannot participate, as the child will most likely suffer from unwanted indigestion and need care. Even still, a tube-fed child can not eat with their peers — in day care, in kindergarten, or in an afternoon school, that child is stigmatized as different. They are not part of the game, nor are their parents.



## 7. Tube Feeding Makes You Obsessed About How To Feed Your Child

With tube feeding, your entire world is encompassed by supplies — tubes, formula, pump, tube connectors, additional diapers, and tissues — and everything centers around the feeding tube. “When is my child going to get the next shot? Will he vomit? Will she suffer? Will he be able to cooperate? Will she resist? Do I have to force my child to let the fluid go into his stomach or bowels?” All these questions and many more may cross your mind. In the end, tubes dominate your family’s life. Your children may become anxious, afraid of the next feeding, and withdraw from you. Sometimes, they are fussy and irritable all day just because the food intake is so uncomfortable.

### MOM’S DUTIES



***In the end, tubes dominate your family’s life. Your children may become anxious, afraid of the next feeding, and withdraw from you.***

### Ready to Make The Change?

Having a medically unnecessary feeding tube makes your family’s life stressful 24 hours a day; whether you’re at home, out and about, or travelling, a medically unnecessary feeding tube is a hindrance to your child — and your family’s — well being. The only real respite comes when your family can transition away from the tube. [Our team](#) can support you and your child throughout the tube weaning process. With NoTube, your child and family can be rid of the nightmare of the tube in around one month.





## GET IN TOUCH



We know finding the best solution for teaching your child to eat without a feeding tube can be intimidating. Want to talk with other parents who have gone through the process and get their perspective?

We have created a special [Facebook group](#) for parents who have gone through our programs. Members cheer each other on, and they are eager to share their stories. It's a great place to learn about our programs and hear firsthand experience from NoTube children and their families.

### HAVE MORE QUESTIONS? CONTACT US.

We would be grateful to learn more about you and your child's story. Simply get in touch with Birgit, our program expert, through any of the contact options below.



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