

# Maintaining Access to Life-Sustaining Nutrition

## Key Facts to Consider:

Enteral and parenteral nutrition products are cost-effective solutions to improve healthcare outcomes and quality of life.

Enteral and parenteral nutrition products are specially formulated.

Enteral and parenteral nutrition products are safe and effective.

Access to medically-necessary, life-sustaining enteral and parenteral nutrition products can be limited.

The American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition defines nutrition support or nutrition support therapy as “Providing parenteral (PN) and/or enteral nutrition (EN) to address or prevent malnutrition.” The term enteral refers to nutrition administered via the gastrointestinal tract. It may be administered orally or via tube feeding. Further, an EN system is defined as “a system of providing nutrition directly into the gastrointestinal tract via a tube, catheter, or stoma that bypasses the oral cavity,” and a PN is defined as “the intravenous administration of nutrients.”<sup>1</sup>

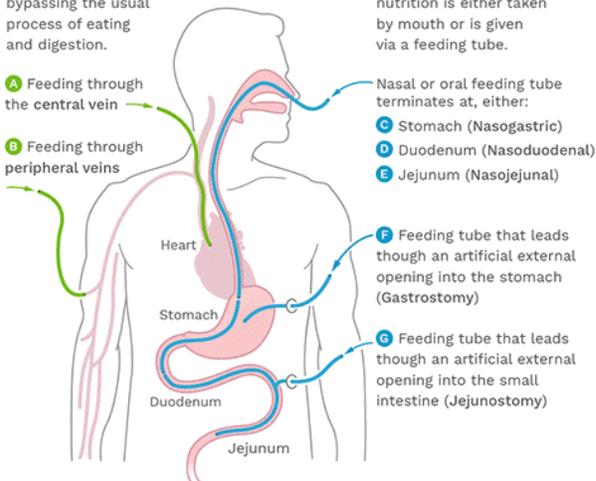
### Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition

#### PARENTERAL NUTRITION

Feeding intravenously, bypassing the usual process of eating and digestion.

A Feeding through the central vein

B Feeding through peripheral veins



#### ENTERAL NUTRITION

Liquid supplemental nutrition is either taken by mouth or is given via a feeding tube.

Nasal or oral feeding tube terminates at, either:

C Stomach (Nasogastric)

D Duodenum (Nasoduodenal)

E Jejunum (Nasojejunal)

F Feeding tube that leads through an artificial external opening into the stomach (Gastrostomy)

G Feeding tube that leads through an artificial external opening into the small intestine (Jejunostomy)

- Enteral and parenteral nutrition products can be a life-sustaining part of patients’ comprehensive healthcare plans.
- Unfortunately, many patients may have restricted access to the specific nutrition products they need.
- Improved access is necessary.

Nutrition support therapy is different from medical nutrition therapy (MNT) in that MNT refers to nutrition counseling services for the purpose of disease management.<sup>2</sup>

## CALL TO ACTION

Support improved access to medically necessary, life-sustaining enteral and parenteral nutrition products so people who need them can maintain or improve their nutrition status, healthcare outcomes, and quality of life.

### Limited or lack of access is related to:



Insurance coverage



Finances to purchase out of pocket



Provider education



Sufficient reimbursement for sustainable supplier distribution



HEALTHCARE NUTRITION COUNCIL

The Healthcare Nutrition Council (HNC) works to ensure patients have access to the enteral and parenteral nutrition products they need. HNC continues to educate and collaborate with legislative and regulatory representatives, patient and consumer advocacy groups, academia, industry, and other stakeholders to promote awareness of the impact of nutrition on health and ensure people have access to enteral and parenteral nutrition products. Visit <https://healthcarenutrition.org/>

#### References

[1] American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) Definition of Terms, Style, and Conventions Used in ASPEN. 2018. Retrieved from [https://www.nutritioncare.org/uploadedFiles/Documents/Guidelines\\_and\\_Clinical\\_Resources/ASPEN%20Definition%20of%20Terms.%20Style.%20and%20Conventions%20Used%20in%20ASPEN%20Board%20of%20Directors%E2%80%9393Approved%20Documents.pdf](https://www.nutritioncare.org/uploadedFiles/Documents/Guidelines_and_Clinical_Resources/ASPEN%20Definition%20of%20Terms.%20Style.%20and%20Conventions%20Used%20in%20ASPEN%20Board%20of%20Directors%E2%80%9393Approved%20Documents.pdf).

[2] Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. MNT Versus Nutrition Education. 2006. Retrieved from <https://www.eatrightpro.org/payment/coding-and-billing/mnt-vs-nutrition-education>.