

Innovative Feeding Holder Improves Quality of Life in Home Enteral Patients and Caregivers: A Look at Confidence, Tolerance, and Mobility

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Introduction

Home enteral nutrition (HEN) patients and caregivers face challenges adhering to prescribed nutrition regimens related to:

- Dexterity issues
- Feeding while traveling outside the home
- Variables impacting quality of life (QOL)

This study evaluated confidence, tolerance and QOL in tube feeding before and after implementation of an Innovative Feeding Holder (IFH).

Methods

A total of 839 HEN patients were surveyed before and after using the FreeArm® through a six question Likert scale and an open-ended question about the patient or caregiver's experience. A total of 71 HEN patients were eligible for the study.

Figure 1:
Distribution of Patient Ages

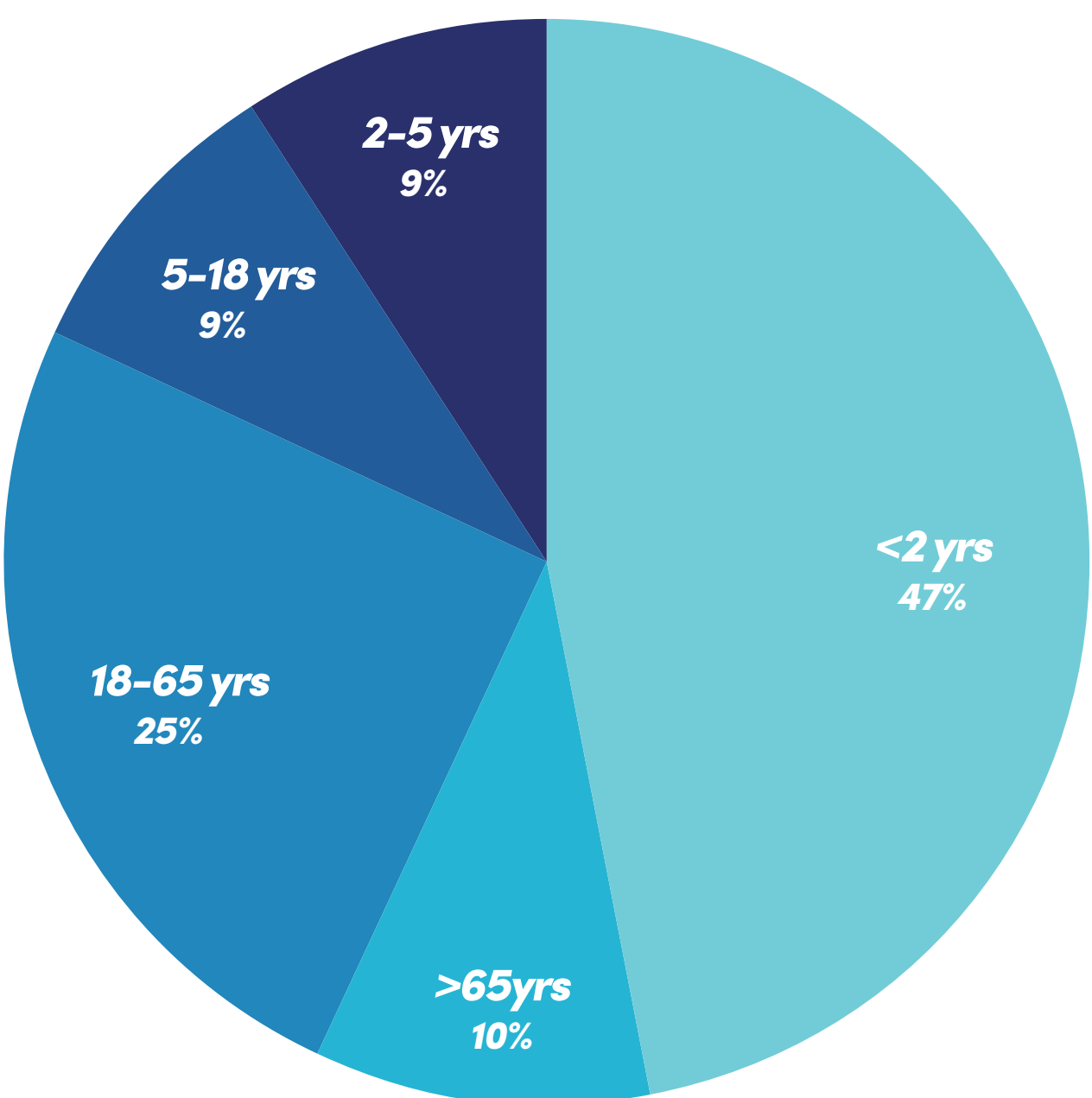
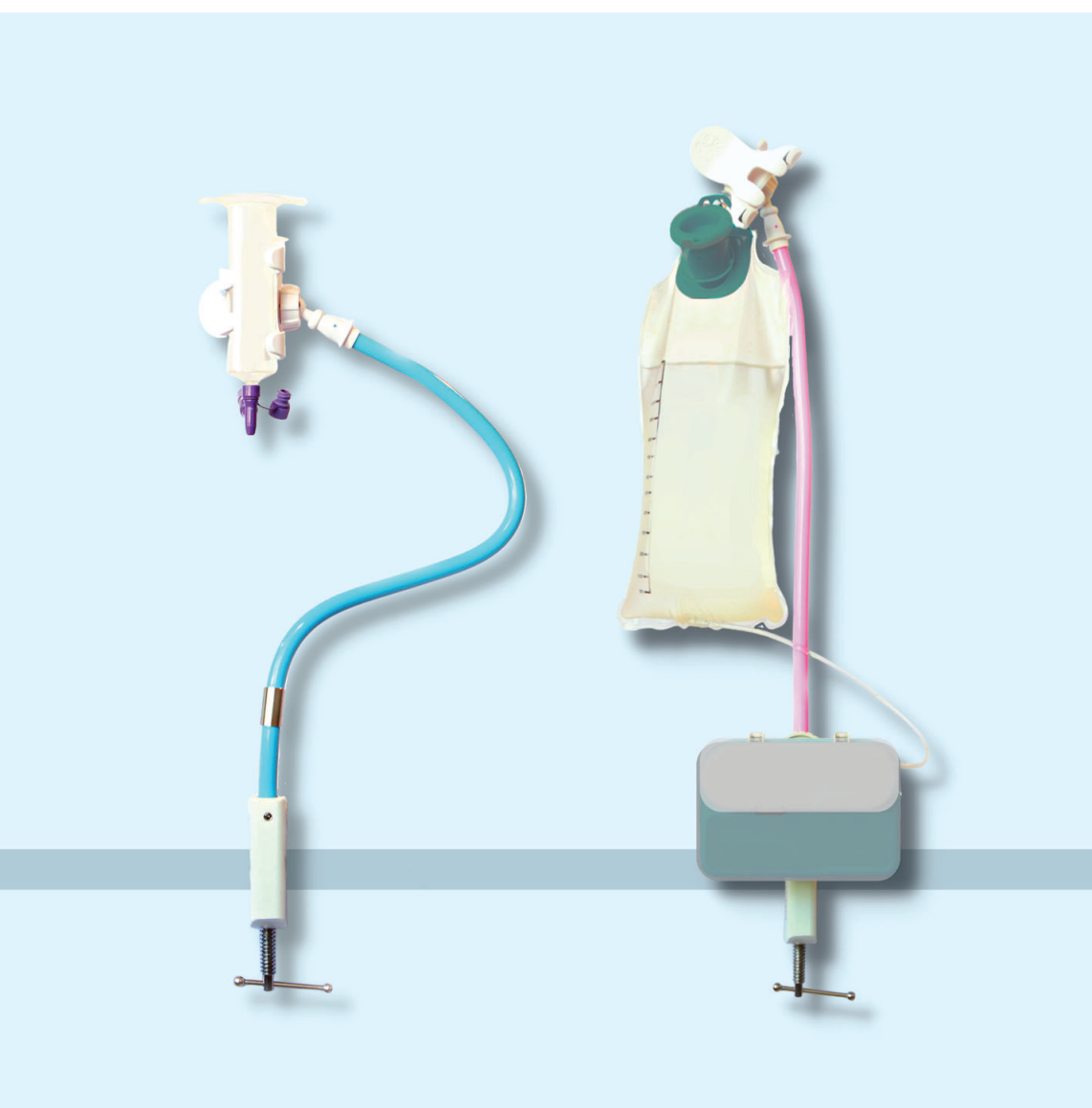
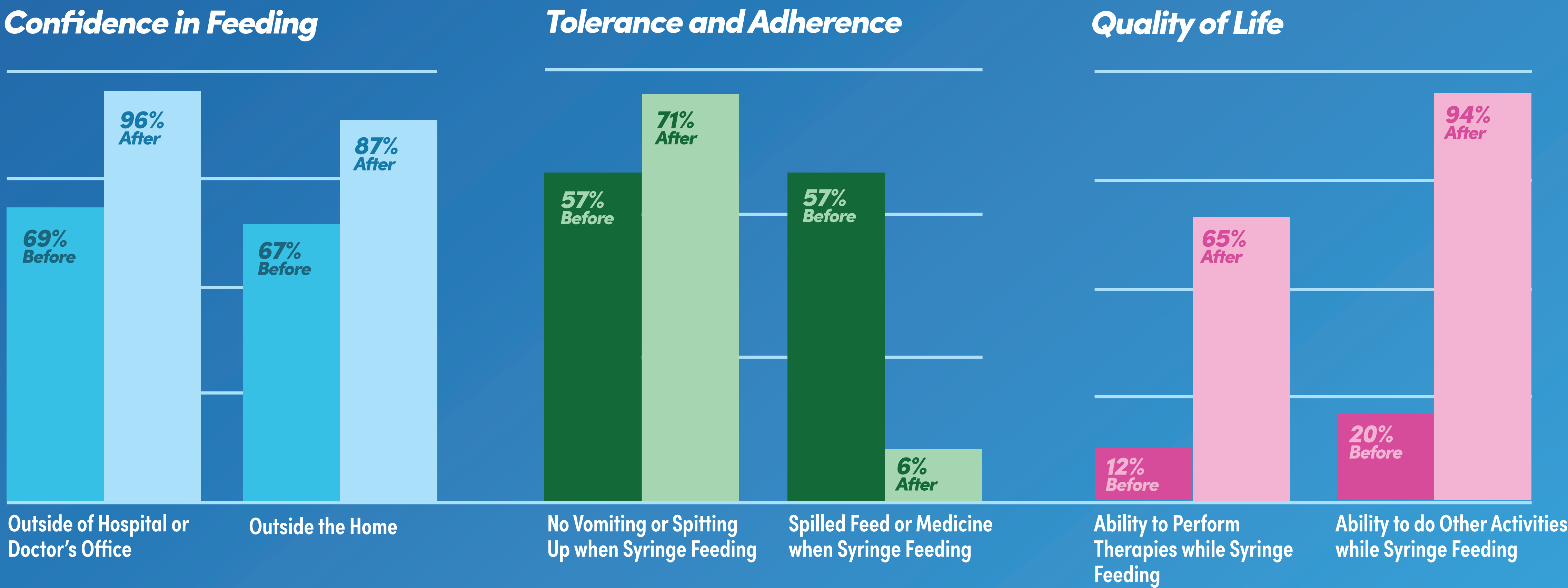


Figure 2:
Innovative Feeding Holder with Syringe and with Pump



Innovative Feeding Holder improved patients' and caregivers' outlook towards having a feeding tube by 92%.

Figure 3:
Impact of Innovative Feeding Holder on Home Enteral Nutrition Patients & Caregivers



Results

- Methods of administration included syringe (30%), pump (45%), and both syringe and pump (25%).
- Feeding confidence **increased by 27%** outside of the hospital or doctor's office.
- Feeding confidence **increased by 20%** when traveling outside of the home.
- Vomiting or spitting up during syringe feeding was **reduced by 14%**.
- Occurrences of spilled syringe feeds or medications were **reduced by 51%**.
- The ability to perform therapies while syringe feeding **increased by 53%**.

Conclusion

Confidence in feeding and overall outlook towards having a feeding tube improved with use of the Innovative Feeding Holder.

- ↓ **Spills during feeding and medication administration**
- ↑ **Confidence in feeding at home and on-the-go**
- ↑ **Tolerance in syringe-fed patients**
- ↑ **Overall outlook toward having a feeding tube**

With the majority of patients in this study being <5 years old, we were also able to capture the impact to the caregiver experience with home tube feeding. We found that the following should be considered when home tube feeding regimens are developed:

- Ability to travel
- Prevent or decrease feed and medication spills
- Capacity to free hands while syringe feeding
- Overall caregiver QOL

Future research could focus on caregiver QOL and the clinical benefits of using the IFH. Quantifying the number of missed feedings due to the lack of mobility and independence may offer insights to nonadherence of HEN prescriptions and regimens.