

# Only costly trip to Austria could help baby Tayden

**BOBBI SANDS**

A PORT Elizabeth family is hoping a trip to Graz in Austria will allow their 22-month-old son to be able to take in food and drink liquids again.

Little Tayden Hershensohnn suffers from feeding tube dependency. As a result he is fed through a tube surgically implanted into his stomach.

He is unable to eat enough normally and is kept alive by the feeding tube.

Tayden was diagnosed with reflux that was aspirating into his lungs when he was just three months old. Because of this he started associating feeding time with the time he would get ill and stopped eating and drinking.

Mom Brene says he only eats a couple of teaspoons every day and has not had a drink of fluid since last year.

"June 25, 2009 is not a date I will easily forget," said Brene.

As a result of Tayden not eating he had a tube inserted.

Because he associated eating with being ill he has developed crycopharyngeal inco-ordination syndrome with laryngeal incompetence.

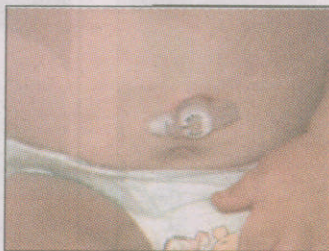
Brene says this means although he is no longer aspirating into his lungs he struggles to get food down.

"At the weekend we drove around for 45 minutes because he had a chip in his mouth and we were scared that if we took him out the car he would not finish it. In any event he did not."

Although Tayden is otherwise healthy his is a rare condition and the Hershensohnns have not found anyone in South Africa who could help.

"We have been to the Red Cross Children's Hospital and paediatric surgeons around South Africa but with no luck."

The Hershensohnns have finally found some help for him but that would mean the family would have to spend three weeks in Austria so specialists there can wean Tayden from his



**Little Tayden Hershensohnn suffers from feeding tube syndrome. INSET: the feeding tube that keeps him alive.**



feeding tube.

"One of the biggest concerns for me as a mother is that he should be reaching certain milestones at his age, but has not.

"His speech has also been affected as his muscles in his mouth are not getting strengthened by eating."

Brene added what was equally frustrating was the feeding tube had come out and broken twice over the last couple of weeks.

"It is a terrible feeling for a mother to then have to take her child back into surgery. In addition Tayden has suffered countless infections in the tube."

Once he gets to Austria Tayden will have round-the-clock-care as well as his own paediatrician, occupational therapist, speech therapist and any other therapist that is needed.

Brene says the trip to Austria will cost in the region of R180 000.

"Wings and Wishes sponsored our flights and we have been having all

sorts of fundraising events."

Two employees at a local video store have even started baking and selling cupcakes to assist them.

To date they have raised R88 000 and several fund-raising activities are in the pipeline.

Doctors thought he would out grow the condition but there has not been any progress over the past year.

He stays at home with his grandmother because creches do not want to accept him with the tube.

"This is a lot for a little boy to handle and it breaks you as a parent to watch your child suffer.

"You never know what tomorrow will bring but although you feel helpless you trust things will work out well," said Brene

To learn more about Tayden and any fund-raisers visit [www.tayden.weebly.com](http://www.tayden.weebly.com).