

Discharge Instructions: Checking Placement of Nasogastric (NG) Feeding Tube



You are going home with a nasogastric (NG) feeding tube in place. An NG tube is a long, thin, flexible tube inserted through the nose into your stomach or small intestine. You will need to check the tube regularly to make sure the tip of the tube stays in your stomach. You were shown how to care for your tube in the hospital. These tubes are used short-term, especially in adults. Tubes are put directly into the stomach. Or they are put into the small intestine if longer access is needed. Examples are a G tube, PEG tube, or PEJ tube. This sheet helps you remember how to care for your tube when you are at home. Keep the phone number of your healthcare provider or caregiver handy in case you have any questions or problems.

Home care

- Gather your supplies:
 - Permanent marker pen
 - Measuring tape or ruler
 - 50 mL syringe for use in flushing the tube and possibly for feedings
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after you touch the tube.
- Check placement of your tube once every day.
- Look for the mark on your tube at the place where it comes out of your nose. If there is no mark, make one.
- Look to see that the mark you made on the tube is still in the same place each time you check placement.
- Keep the outside tubing above the level of your stomach to prevent backflow of fluids through the tube.
- Flush the tube before and after feedings or medicines.
- Change the tape that fixes the outside tubing to your nose or cheek every day and whenever it gets dirty or wet.
- Look for any redness, swelling, or ulceration at the site where the tube enters your nose.
- Measure the length of the tube from your nose (nasal tube) to the end of the tube. If it's not the same length as it was the day before, your tube may not be in the right place.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following:

- Trouble breathing during feeding, flushing, or giving medicine
- Tube that can't be unclogged
- Tube that falls out or difficulty telling whether your tube is in your stomach
- Tube that is cracked or breaking down
- Diarrhea that lasts more than 3 loose stools

- Constipation that lasts more than 48 hours
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Red, warm, or tender skin around the tube
- Sudden weight loss or gain (more than 2 pounds in 24 hours)
- Bloated or tight stomach
- Signs tube is not in right place. If these occur, stay in an upright position. Don't lie down:
 - Coughing
 - Feeding formula in your saliva
 - Problems catching your breath

Call 911

Call 911 right away if any of the following occur:

- Choking, dizziness, or lightheadedness
- Trouble breathing
- Blood or drainage that looks like coffee grounds

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