

Balloon gastrostomy feeding tube care advice

Information for
patients

f there are leaks of fluid around the gastrostomy tube, OR pain on feeding, OR new bleeding, OR the tube falls out, stop feed immediately and telephone for urgent advice.

CONTACT WARD J91 AT SJUH ON 0113 2069191 (OR 0113 2068291).



NAME:

NHS NUMBER:

TUBE TYPE (MANUFACTURER):

TUBE SIZE (FR):

DATE OF PLACEMENT:

Comfort and safety

Always wash your hands before handling your feeding tube or gastrostomy site.

If you have concerns about the position of the tube, ask your community or company nurse to show you how to check the tube position with pH paper.

Skin care and tube position

Never put water, feed or medications down the tube if you are unsure it's position.

For the first 7 days after insertion, clean your gastrostomy tube site daily with cooled, boiled water. After 7 days, you can use warm, soapy water. After cleaning, always dry gently. Make sure the fixation plate is sitting against your skin

(approximately ½ cm away from the entry site) and if possible, secure your tube above the entry site to prevent the tube from dragging.

Avoid using cotton wool, talcum powder or creams on your site. If you have any signs of swelling, redness, odour or irritation, contact your community nurse, company nurse or dietitian for advice. Some clear discharge may be present, this is normal.

Tube care

After the tube has been in place for **14 days**, rotate your tube around 360 degrees once per day.

There is a water filled balloon at the end of the tube, inside your stomach, holding the tube in place. **Every 2 weeks**, the water in the balloon will need to be changed. The balloon starts to lose water over time so the tube is at risk of falling out if this is not done. Your community nurse can do this for you. After checking the balloon, it is important to check the tube position using pH paper. In time, your community nurse may show you how to do this for yourself.

After **12 - 16 weeks**, your tube will need to be changed. Your community or company nurse will do this for you. It is a simple procedure that can be carried out at home.

Extension sets

Extension sets lengthen the tubing, which may help you when feeding or giving medicines. They also have a clamp attached, which you may find useful. If you are using an extension set, this can either stay on the end of the tube or can be taken on and off each time you feed.

If you take it on and off, you must wash the extension set thoroughly after feeding in the same way as you do your syringes, see the 'Your Guide to Using a Feeding Tube at Home' booklet. You will receive four extension sets per month with your feed delivery and they should be changed weekly.

Positioning during feeding

When you are feeding, particularly during the night, ensure you are propped up with pillows. A position of 45 degrees will allow the liquid feed to move out of your stomach properly, reducing the risk of you being sick.

What to do if the tube falls out

In the unlikely event your tube falls out, contact your community or company nurse as soon as possible and locate your spare balloon gastrostomy tube (this should have been provided with your first delivery). The nurses may need to use the spare tube. You should always take this tube with you if you are away from home for long periods of time (e.g. holidays).



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