

The ROYAL MARSDEN

NHS Foundation Trust

Caring for your Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) tube

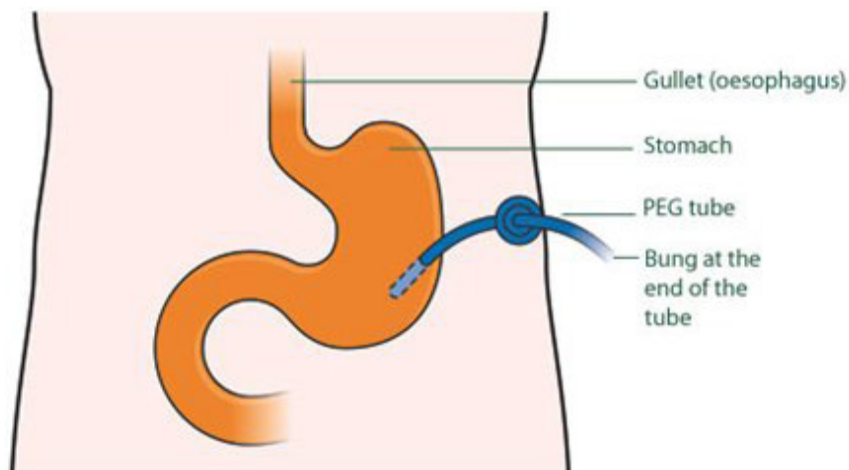
Rehabilitation Department

Patient Information



NHS

This leaflet aims to provide you with information about your PEG tube and to answer any questions you may have.



© This image has been reproduced with the permission of Macmillan Cancer Support

How do I care for my PEG tube in the first two weeks after placement?

Always wash your hands with soap and water and dry them before caring for the tube.

While the stoma site is healing do not soak in water, for example do not bath, but you can shower instead.

Clean the skin around the stoma site with warm water and soap, cleaning gently from the site outwards in a circular motion.

Clean the tube and external retention device. Dry the area gently with a clean towel. The retention device should be sitting approximately 1cm from your abdomen.

The external retention device should not be moved during the first two weeks whilst the track (the insertion site) is healing.

The tube must be flushed with 60ml of water before and after giving feed and medications. This is to prevent the tube from getting blocked.

If there is any sign of infection (redness, oozing, pain), let your district nurse or key worker know and they can recommend appropriate treatment. A small amount of leakage of stomach secretions is not unusual. If you are concerned, contact your dietitian.

If you experience pain on feeding, prolonged or severe pain following your procedure, fresh bleeding, or external leakage of gastric contents, stop the feed immediately, and contact a member of your medical team or dietitian

Caring for your feeding tube after two weeks

After two weeks when the stoma site has healed, you can bathe as normal. However, ensure that the area around the tube is dried thoroughly afterwards.

Rotate the tube at least once a week to prevent the tube adhering (sticking) to the stomach. This can be done by opening the external retention device and turning the tube 360 degrees, then gently pulling the tube back to its original position and placing the external retention device back to its original position.

Fit the external retention device so that it lies 2-3mm from the skin surface. The retention device may need to be loosened or tightened as you gain or lose weight.

Make sure you clamp your tube at different points along its length to avoid damaging the tube.

Some discolouration of the tube is normal and does not affect its ability to deliver feeds.

Can I administer medications down my PEG tube?

Please ensure that your medication is prescribed in a soluble or liquid form, and check with your doctor / pharmacist that all medications are suitable to be given via your tube.

The tube must be flushed with at least 30ml of water before and after giving any medication. This is to prevent the tube from getting blocked.

What should I do if the tube is blocked?

- Gently flush the tube with warm water using a 60ml syringe.
- If you can visibly see where the tube is blocked, massage the tube with your finger and thumb or put a warm compression on it to help break up the blockage.
- If the tube remains blocked, gently draw back on the syringe and attempt to flush as before. It can take more than 30 minutes to unblock the tube so be patient.
- If unsuccessful, contact your key worker, nutrition nurse or dietitian.

What should I do if the tube falls out?

You will need to have a new tube inserted as soon as possible as the tract will start to heal within a few hours if no tube is in place.

Put a dry clean dressing over the hole to prevent stomach contents leaking onto your skin or clothes.

Contact your key worker, nurse or dietitian **immediately**.

If it is after office hours or on a weekend please go to your local Accident and Emergency Unit **immediately** and take your PEG tube with you so the staff can identify which type of tube is required. If you have a spare tube at home please bring this with you also.

How do I look after my feeding equipment?

Giving sets

You need to change the giving set every 24 hours.

If you are giving more than one feed a day, it is important that the giving set is stored correctly between feeds to keep it as clean as possible. When you have finished a feed, place the empty bottle with the giving set still attached in a plastic bag in the fridge e.g. supermarket carrier bag. At the time of your next feed disconnect the giving set from the empty bottle and immediately attach it to the new feed bottle. Throw away the old, empty feed bottle. This applies to both gravity feeds and feeds taken via a pump.

Repeat this process at the end of each feed and remember to throw away the giving set at the end of the day.

Syringes

When you are at home your..... is responsible for supplying you with syringes.

Reusable syringes are used for flushing water and medication down the tube.

Some people will also use syringes to give feed down the tube (bolus feeding).

Each reusable syringe can be used 30 times and for most people the syringe will last one week (4 uses per day).

Between each use the following procedure should be followed to clean the syringe:

- Clean immediately after each administration using fresh, warm soapy water (domestic washing-up liquid)
- The plunger should be removed to allow for thorough cleaning

- Other approved cleaning methods include dishwasher (tip uppermost), immersion in boiling water (3 minutes), cold sterilising solution (as per manufacturer's instructions) and microwave steam-steriliser (as per manufacturer's instructions)
- Allow to air dry (parts still separate)
- Once dry store in a clean, dry container
- Only reassemble syringe prior to use

Please discuss with your dietitian if your supply of syringes is not adequate.

Pump

It is important to keep your pump clean. Before cleaning ensure you unplug it from the wall.

Clean using a damp cloth. Wipe any spillage as soon as possible. Stubborn stains may be removed using mild detergent and warm water.

Do not, under any circumstances, immerse the main body of the pump in water.

If you have any questions about your feed or equipment ask your dietitian, feeding company or district nurse.

General

Contact your nurse or GP if the skin around the tube becomes red, sore, or there is oozing from the site.

If you experience symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea or abdominal distension, contact your key worker, doctor or dietitian immediately.

Useful contacts

Hospital Dietitian

Community Dietitian

District Nurse/ Community Nurse

Nutrition Feed Company

Nutrition Feed Company Nurse Advisor

Key worker

Useful links

PINNT

A support group for patients receiving artificial nutrition

<http://pinnt.com/Home.aspx>

Macmillan Cancer Support

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Livingwithandaftercancer/Eatingwell/Nutritionalsupport/Nutritionalsupport.aspx>

Cancer Research UK

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/coping-with-cancer/coping-physically/diet/managing/drip-or-tube-feeding>

Nutricia Flocare Infinity pump

<http://www.nutriciaflocare.com/pumptrain.php?pump=infinity>

The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline: 020 8915 6899

You can ring the hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call us straight away if you are feeling unwell or are worried about the side effects of cancer treatments.

This service provides specialist advice and support to all Royal Marsden patients, as well as to their carers, and both hospital and community-based doctors and nurses caring for Royal Marsden patients.

Notes and questions

References

This booklet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this booklet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Freephone: 0800 783 7176

Email: patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk

No conflicts of interest were declared in the production of this booklet.

Should you require information in an alternative format, please contact The Royal Marsden Help Centre.



The patient information service is generously supported by The Royal Marsden Charity.

royalmarsden.org

Registered Charity No.1095197

Published July 2015. Planned review July 2018
© The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust RS-1518-03

Life demands excellence



Radiotherapy and
Chemotherapy Services
F538021 & F538022

