Home Care for Your Gastrostomy Tube (G-Tube) or PEG Tube

What is a G-tube and PEG tube?

A gastrostomy tube, also called a G-Tube, is a flexible tube put into your stomach through your abdomen during surgery. A PEG tube is a common type of G-tube. This tube has one opening that leads to your stomach. Tube feeding formula, fluids and medicines can be given through your G-Tube. Your stomach contents can also be drained through your tube.

How should I care for my skin around the tube?

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water or use alcohol based hand sanitizer.

2. Clean your skin around the tube using soap, warm water, and a washcloth or cotton swab. Gently wash under the rubber bumper, and clean the tube starting closest to your skin and working outward.
3. Rinse with water. Let the area dry completely. You may also choose to rinse off in the shower.

4. You may secure the tube to your abdomen with a tube holder or tape. This stops your tube from moving. Your health care team may have some suggestions for how to best secure the tube.

5. When you are done, wash your hands with soap and warm water. Dry your hands well with a clean towel.

6. If your doctor or dietitian has told you to use a dressing, it is important to change it at least once every day or when it becomes wet or soiled.

7. You may have fasteners or stitches in your skin around the tube site. The fasteners often will fall off on their own. If they do not, ask your doctor when and how these will be removed. Your doctor will tell you when your stitches should be removed.

8. Call your doctor or other member of your health care team if your skin becomes irritated around your tube site. **Do not** use any ointment or alcohol-based products around your tube site unless a member of your health care team tells you it is okay.

**What if there is leaking around my tube?**

- It is common to have a small amount of drainage around the area where the tube goes into your stomach.

- Sometimes movement of the tube can lead to leaking around it. You can support your tube with a dressing or tube holder so that it moves as little as possible. Your health care team can give you more information on these options.

- If you see an increase in leakage around your tube or if the leakage has an odor or color change, **call your doctor or other member of your health care team**.

**What if my tube is clogged?**

It is important to flush your tube daily with 60 mL of water to keep it clear. If your tube is clogged, follow these steps:

1. Use warm water and a syringe to flush your tube. Move the plunger on the syringe in and out several times to clear the clog.
2. If you can see the clog, rub your fingers along the outside of the tube to break up the clog.

3. If your clog does not clear, **call your doctor to discuss**.
   - Do not use soda or pop to clear the clog.
   - Do not put anything into your tube to clear the clog.
   - Ask your doctor or dietitian about products that are available to clear clogs.

If you give medicine through your feeding tube, see the handout, **Giving Medicines Through Your Feeding Tube**.

**Call your doctor or other member of your health care team if you have any of the following:**

- Bumper is too tight and leaves a mark or dent on your skin
- Bumper is too loose and the disk moves out more than an inch
- The tube comes out
- Bloody or coffee ground colored drainage is seen in or around the tube
- Nausea or vomiting that does not go away
- Constipation with no bowel movement in 3 days or more
- Diarrhea of more than 6 stools a day
- Bloated, tight, painful stomach
- Signs of infection
  - More drainage around the tube than usual
  - Drainage with an odor
  - Redness, tenderness, or warmth around the tube

For more information about tube feeding, ask for the patient education handout, **Questions and Answers about Your Tube Feeding**.

If you have a feeding tube with ENFit connectors, you will be given the patient education handout, **ENFit Feeding Tubes - Cleaning and Syringe Use**.