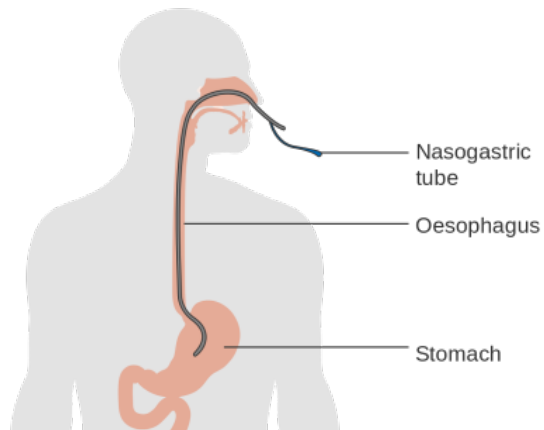


Nasogastric Feeding Tube for Enteral Nutrition

Information for patients



What is a nasogastric feeding tube?

A nasogastric feeding tube is a thin flexible tube specially designed to be inserted into the nose and down into the stomach. This tube allows you to receive liquid nutrition, water and sometimes medication into the stomach.

Why do you need a nasogastric tube?

There are several reasons why a doctor or dietitian may suggest you have a nasogastric feeding tube:

- You may not be able to manage food and drink safely due to swallowing problems. Continuing to eat and drink may risk any food or fluid going into your lungs instead of your stomach, which could result in chest infections.
- A medical condition or disease that makes eating and drinking difficult.
- A medical condition that prevents you from eating or digesting your food.
- A medical condition that results in a loss of appetite.

How is the nasogastric tube inserted?

A nurse or a doctor will explain the procedure to you and ask for your consent to go ahead with the procedure. They will agree a signal with you if you wish to stop the procedure for any reason.

They make sure you are sitting in an upright position and will pass the nasogastric tube into your nose, down your throat and into your stomach. If you are able, they may ask you to take a drink or swallow to aid the movement of the tube down into your stomach.

It is important that the nasogastric tube is passed safely into your stomach. They will confirm the position by withdrawing some content from your stomach using a feeding syringe. Sometimes you may have an x-ray of your chest to confirm the correct position – the nurse or doctor will tell you if you need this.

The nasogastric tube will be secured to the outside of your nose at your nostril and cheek with an adhesive dressing. This dressing can be easily renewed as needed.

Nursing staff will regularly check the position of the nasogastric tube by withdrawing some content from your stomach. This will be carried out each time you are going to receive any liquid feed, water or medication down your nasogastric tube.

The nasogastric tube can remain in place for 3 months before it needs to be changed. Your nurse, doctor or dietitian will arrange this with you.

Will you be able to eat and drink?

You will be advised if you are able to eat and drink after the tube has been placed. The nasogastric tube itself will not stop you from eating or drinking.

The dietitian will discuss with you the method and the timing of feeding through the nasogastric tube to suit you best. The dietitian will continue to review your progress on a regular basis during your time on feeding.

What if you need to go home with a nasogastric tube?

You will need to consider who will be giving you the feed when you are at home. There will be full training and written information given to you or family/carer to allow you to look after the tube. Following the training the staff will make sure you are fully familiar with administering the liquid feed, water, and medications and handling the equipment. You will be discharged once you/they feel safe and confident with this.

The dietitians from the Community Enteral Nutrition Team (CENT) will support you and your family/carers when you are at home.

You will be given advice on what to do if you have any problems.

Useful contact numbers

Discharging Ward:

CENT: 0131 536 7848

PINNT - PINNT is a national, independent, not for profit membership charity established for over 30 years providing mutual support and understanding to hundreds of adults and children and their families adapting to life on home artificial nutrition. PINNT provides this support direct via local and regional groups, online via forums and literature and a national telephone and email helpline.

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