FINE BORE NASOGASTRIC TUBE PLACEMENT

What is a Fine Bore Nasogastric Tube?

Your doctor has recommended that you have a nasogastric feeding tube inserted. This is a fine bore tube that enables you to be fed directly into your stomach. The tube is placed via the nostril in your nose and down the back of your throat into the oesophagus (gullet).

Why Nasogastric Tube?

- When you are unable to take adequate food and drink by mouth safely this tube is one way to have liquid nourishment and medications, they will go directly into the stomach.
- It may also be used to supplement poor oral intake of food and fluids.
- The tube is usually used short term 4-6 weeks, but in some cases is needed for longer.

The procedure will be explained and you will be asked if you understand and are happy to proceed.

There are some risks associated with Nasogastric tube placement, however only trained nurses and doctors who have attended a specific training session to insert these tubes carry out the procedure as:

- The tube can be misplaced in the lungs and this could lead to breathing difficulties or pneumonia. However the tube position is checked daily to ensure it is in the correct place
- The tube could lie in the oesophagus (gullet) which could cause discomfort and a collection of feed could backflow and be inhaled into the lungs.
- Very rarely the tube can perforate the lining of the oesophagus (gullet) which could require medical treatment.
How is the Nasogastric Tube inserted?

- A member of medical or nursing staff will place the tube.
- You will be required to sit upright in bed or a chair with your head tilted slightly forward if possible.
- You will be asked to clear “blow” your nose if able to do so.
- If you are able to take oral fluids you may be asked to take sips of water to help the tube go down.
- The procedure may be uncomfortable but not painful.
- The tube will go up the nose, via the nostril, and down the back of your throat (you may be asked to swallow at this point) then down into the stomach.
- The tube will then be tested for stomach content via a syringe attached to the end. If the test confirms correct tube position in the stomach, the tube will then be secured in place with adhesive tape to the nose and side of face.
- If there is no stomach content to test you will have a chest x-ray to confirm position of the tube.
- Once the nasogastric tube is in the correct position (stomach) and this has been confirmed it can then be used.

What goes down the tube?

- Feed (liquid)
- Medication (liquid form)
- Nutritional supplements (liquid form)
- Water

Can the tube move?

- The tube is secured with tape on the nose and cheek. If this tape breaks loose or has been pulled the tube may move and fall out.
- Sometimes if you vomit or have a coughing episode the tube can become dislodged.
- The nursing staff will check the tube position after these possible events and prior to feeding.
Can I go home with a Nasogastric Feeding Tube?

Yes, occasionally patients need to go home with fine bore nasogastric feeding tubes. The Nutrition Nurses will train you or your carers how to use the tube and any equipment prior to your discharge. If you or your family are unable to care for the nasogastric tube, cares or district nurses will do some of the care. The Nutrition Nurses are available for advice and support.

Contact Details:

Clinical Nurse Specialist in Nutrition Support - Bleep 2372

Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Tel: 482 0000 (Switchboard)
Nutrition and Dietetic Department - Tel: 445 2074 (Direct Line)


Data Protection

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible.

In order to assist us improve the services available your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews. Further information is available in the leaflet Disclosure of Confidential Information IL137, via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website or the PALS Service.

Information Leaflet: No 77
Version: 3
Title: Fine Bore Nasogastric Tube Placement
First Published: August 07
Last reviewed: July 2012
Review Date: July 2014
Author: Deborah Woodall, Nutrition Support Nurse

This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request