

Replacing a gastrostomy tube (g-tube)

What is a g-tube?

A gastrostomy tube (g-tube) is a flexible, plastic tube placed directly into the stomach through the abdomen and stomach wall. Your child has a gastrostomy tube (g-tube) to give them feedings and medicines. They may have 1 of these types of g-tubes:

- AMT Mini-One
- MIC-KEY
- BARD button
- MIC
- PEG

What happens if the g-tube comes out at home?

- Stay calm and do not panic. There may be a small amount of bleeding from the site. The site may be red and tender. This is all normal.
- If you were taught to replace the g-tube, replace it within 30 minutes. This is to prevent the hole from closing.
- If you were not taught to replace the g-tube (or if you do not have a spare tube at home), take your child to a Children's emergency department (ED).
- If it is a **new g-tube** and your child has not had their clinic visit 8 to 10 weeks after surgery, take your child to a Children's ED. Do not feed your child or place anything in the hole.

How do I replace the g-tube?

Some guidelines for replacing the g-tube are listed below. Talk with the care team about specific directions for your child.

1. Gather these supplies:
 - G-tube
 - Water soluble jelly (such as K-Y Jelly)
 - Cup of water
 - 10 mL (milliliter) syringe
 - Large 60 mL pointed tip syringe (to flush the tube)
2. Wash your hands well with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
3. Wash around the g-tube site with soap and water.
4. Test the balloon. To do this:
 - Pull up 5 mL of clean drinking water into a 10 mL syringe.
 - Connect the syringe to the balloon port of the g-tube.
 - Inflate the balloon with the water.
 - Check the balloon for water leaks. **Do not use the tube if there is a water leak.**
 - When done, pull out all of the water from the balloon using the syringe.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Replacing a gastrostomy tube (g-tube), continued

5. Squeeze a small amount of water soluble jelly (such as K-Y Jelly) onto the tip of the deflated balloon on the end of the g-tube.
6. Gently put the g-tube into the g-tube site. If the g-tube will not slide in easily, do not force it. Stop and call your child's doctor.
7. Hold the g-tube in place with your fingers. Attach the syringe to the balloon port. Push 5 mL of water into the port to inflate the balloon. Take the syringe out of the balloon port.
8. Gently pull on the g-tube until the balloon meets or stops against the inside of the stomach wall. If the g-tube has a disc, secure the g-tube by pushing the disc on the g-tube down against the skin.
9. Check for stomach (or gastric) contents to make sure the g-tube is in the right place. To do this:
 - Attach a large syringe to the g-tube feeding port.
 - Pull back on the syringe to allow contents to flow into the syringe.
 - Look for stomach contents (greenish-yellow fluid or curdled formula).

If you do not see stomach contents:

- Deflate the balloon.
- Tape down the tube.
- Take your child to a Children's ED.

If you see stomach contents:

- Push on the syringe to return the contents back to the stomach.
- Flush the tube with water.
 - For babies, use 15 mL of water.
 - For children and teens, use 30 mL of water.
- **If the water will not go through the tube easily, stop and call your child's doctor or take your child to a Children's ED.**

When should I call the doctor?

If you have any problems with the g-tube after replacing it, call your child's gastroenterologist (stomach doctor) right away or take your child to a Children's ED.

Also call your child's doctor if:

- There is redness, swelling or pain at the g-tube site.
- There is unusual drainage from the site after 48 to 72 hours.
- Your child has a fever (temperature of 100.4°F or higher)
- You have any questions or concerns about how your child looks or feels.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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