

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 one 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 you have not been taught to replace the g-tube, place the blue catheter you were given into the hole and take your child to a Children's emergency ED.

How do I replace the g-tube?

Some guidelines for replacing the g-tube are listed below. Talk with a member of your child's 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 insert 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. Pull up the advised amount of water for your child's age into a large, pointed syringe. For babies, use 15 mL of water. For children and teens, use 30 mL of water.
 - Put the syringe into the feeding port of the g-tube.
 - Pull on the syringe. This is to let stomach contents 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, and take your child to a Children's ED.
 - Then push the water and stomach contents back into the tube to clear the g-tube.
 - 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 (38°C)].
- 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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