About your tube

The button gastrostomy tube is a short feeding tube made of silicone. One end of the button tube is inside the stomach. The other end of the tube comes out level with the skin. The button has a valve inside to keep stomach fluid from leaking through the tube. The tube can be used to give feedings and medicines into the stomach.

Some button tubes come with special tubing to give tube feedings. **Take the special tubing with you if you need to go to the hospital.** Most hospitals do not have the special tubing available.

Name or type of tube: __________________________________________________________

How to care for your tube

**Clean your skin around the button tube each day. Follow these steps:**

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Rinse and dry well with a clean towel.
2. Gather these supplies:
   - Cotton swabs
   - Mild soap and water in a small container
3. Wash your hands again with soap and water.
4. Check the skin around the tube. Look for signs of infection and check to see if the button is too tight or loose. **If you have these or other problems, call your doctor.**

5. Clean your skin:
   - Dip a cotton swab in soap and water. Clean the skin around the tube.
   - Dip another cotton swab in water. Clean the area again to remove any soap.
   - Use another cotton swab to dry the skin.

6. **If you have drainage, place a gauze dressing around the tube. Do NOT place the gauze under the button.** Your nurse can show you how to apply this dressing.

**Call your doctor if you have any of these problems:**

**Tube changes:**
- Button is too tight and leaves a mark or dent on your skin
- Button is too loose and the tube moves in or out more than 1 inch
- The tube comes out
- There is a large amount of leakage around the tube (dressing soaked more than once a day)
- The tube is clogged and does not flush or the tube feeding will not go through the tube

**Body changes:**
- Your skin around tube has signs of infection:
  - Redness
  - Warm to touch
  - Firm to touch
  - Tender
  - More drainage than usual
  - Drainage that smells bad
  - Drainage that is yellow-green in color
- Fever of 101 degrees F or 38.3 degrees C or higher
- Bloody or coffee ground colored drainage through the tube
- A sudden increase or decrease in the amount of drainage through the tube
- Unusual or sudden weight loss or weight gain (more than 2 pounds a day)
- Nausea or vomiting that does not go away
- Constipation with no bowel movement for 3 days
- Diarrhea of more than 6 loose stools a day
- Stomach becomes bloated or swollen and tight
- A stomach residual more than the amount your doctor has set for you

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**Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

The Library for Health Information is available to help you find more health information at (614) 293-3707 or e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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