Nasogastric (NG) Tube

A nasogastric tube (NG tube) is a long plastic, clear or red tube placed by a doctor or nurse. It is put in through the nose and passes into the stomach. You may also hear the tube referred to as a Dobhoff tube. This is a smaller NG tube that may be placed into the stomach or extended past the stomach to promote food, fluid or medicines.

The NG tube has many temporary uses. It may be used to:

- Remove fluid and air from the stomach.
- Give medicine or tube feedings. The patient may need temporary access for nutrition, hydration, and medicines if he or she has problems with swallowing and/or eating.
- Get a sample of stomach fluid for laboratory tests.
- Remove blood if the patient is bleeding in the stomach.

The fluid that comes from the stomach through the NG tube can be different colors. The NG tube may cause a sore throat, and the patient may feel like gagging. The doctor or nurse will tell the patient if he or she is able to eat or drink while the tube is in place.

Call the nurse if you notice:

- The NG tube leaks
- The tape that holds the tube in place on the patient’s nose becomes loose
- The NG tube comes out
- The patient has uncomfortable feelings of stomach fullness
- The patient has nausea
- The patient has a sore throat or nose, painful eyes or sinuses

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