

UC DAVIS

HEALTH SYSTEM

GASTROSTOMY TUBE CARE

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Wash your hands before and after touching your Gastrostomy tube

LOOK AT THE SITE

Every day look at the skin around the tube. It should be clear clean and pink, just like the rest of your skin. A small amount of clear drainage is normal. Many people get a slight redness around the site with a cold or flu-like illness. Redness, warmth, tenderness and pus around the site could be a sign of infection. Contact your doctor if this happens.

CLEAN THE SITE

Clean the tube site once or twice daily with warm water and soap. Crusting can be removed using a q-tip and warm water or hydrogen peroxide. You can take a tub bath two weeks after surgery.

ROTATE THE TUBE

After the stitches have been removed you can begin to rotate the tube a little bit each day to help the site heal and mature.

CHECK POSITION

Check the position of the tube each day by measuring the length outside your body. The length should be the same each day. Call your physician's office if there are noticeable changes in length.

FLUSHING

Flush the tube with water before and after feedings and before and after medications. Use about 20 cc's of water each time. This keeps the inside of the tube nice and clean.

ACCIDENTAL REMOVAL

If the tube comes out within the first few weeks, cover the hole with a dressing or towel and contact your doctor.

If the tube comes out after 6-8 weeks and after the first change, try to gently replace the tube or contact your doctor.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR OR CLINIC

Severe abdominal/stomach pain

Abdominal/stomach distention or bloating

Persistent nausea or vomiting

Unable to flush Gastrostomy tube

Redness, warmth, tenderness, swelling around the tube, with a high fever.

Unable to replace tube if it comes out.

Large amounts of drainage or leakage around the tube

Extreme discomfort during feeding