

Before your child's Nasogastric (NG) tube

Children's Services

This booklet is intended to offer information to parents and carers who have children needing a naso-gastric (NG) tube inserted.

What is a NG tube?

A NG tube is a thin tube which goes into your child's nose and down into their stomach. They come in different lengths and thickness and can be kept in short or long term.

Why do some children need to have a NG tube?

Many children have feeding difficulties that can be helped by taking 'high energy' drinks or medication. Other children have more complicated feeding difficulties requiring the use of an NG tube in the short or long term.

If a child is unable to eat or drink all that they need for their growth and development, they may need to have a NG tube inserted. If a decision is made for your child to have a NG tube, this will provide a way for extra nourishments to be given, usually in the form of a milk formula. Your child's dietitian will discuss the type and amount of feed your child will need. Having feeds this way is known as 'enteral feeding'.

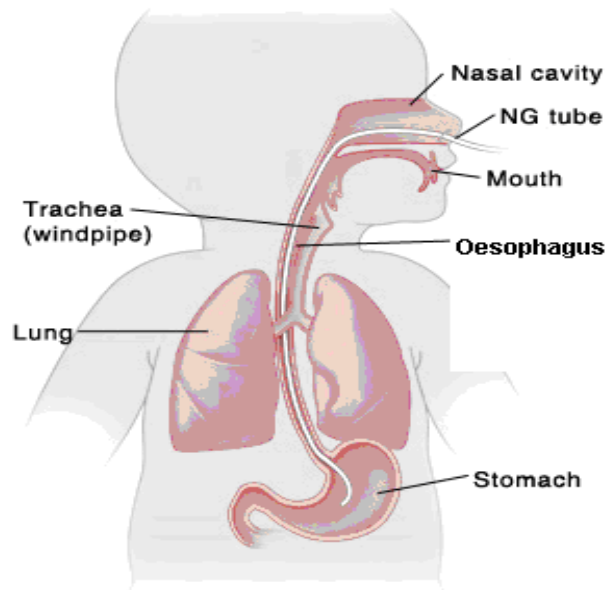
Often, children can feed by mouth as well as having NG feeds. This will depend on what your child's feeding difficulties are. Some examples of the many reasons for a child needing this help are:

- They may have difficulty with normal sucking, chewing and swallowing.
- They may have a respiratory disease which causes breathlessness whilst eating. This can lead to the inability to eat enough food to maintain their growth and development.
- They may have a condition where extra nutrition is needed for growth and development, and they are unable to take all of this by mouth.
- They might not be able to take medication by mouth.

- They require a trial of a special milk feed to try and improve the symptoms they are experiencing due to an underlying medical condition.

How is a NG tube inserted and how long will my child be in hospital?

- A NG tube is usually inserted by a nurse when the child is awake on the ward. In some circumstances, sedation can be used. If your child is undergoing a general anaesthetic for another procedure such as an endoscopy, it can be inserted the same time as that, when the child is asleep.
- The NG tube is passed into the child's nose through either nostril, down the back of their nose, into their oesophagus and into their stomach.



- Your child will need to stay in hospital for a few days so that you can be taught how to safely care for and use the NG tube and your child can get started on feeds.
- You will be able to stay with your child whilst they are in hospital
- Depending on what type of NG tube is inserted, this will need to be changed every 7 days or 6 weeks. This can be done in the community when your child is awake. Your children's community nurse will do this. You can also be trained how to do this if you wish. Your children's community nurse will do this training.

How is the NG tube kept in place?

Your child's tube will be secured onto their face with soft tape. They will also have a soft dressing applied directly to their cheek to prevent the skin from becoming sore.

Risks/Benefits/Effects on Quality of Life

As each patient is different, these will be discussed with your child's doctor before the NG tube is put in.

What to do if you have you any questions?

If you have any questions these can be answered by the nurse on the ward. After you go home, these can be answered by your children's community nurse. It is sometimes a good idea to write them down. Before your child is discharged you will be given an aftercare booklet and the contact numbers needed are included in there.

Contact Details

Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am to 5pm

Please contact your child's community nurse or telephone the ward that you were discharged from.

Contact number community nurse:

Contact number ward:

Outside the hours stated above:

Please telephone the ward that you were discharged from.

Contact number:

For further information

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can offer on-the-spot advice and information about the NHS. You can contact them on freephone 0800 032 02 02 or e-mail northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

Useful websites

If you would like further information about health conditions and treatment options, you may wish to have a look at the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk. On this website there is an information prescription generator www.nhs.uk/ips which brings together a wealth of approved patient information from the NHS and charity partners which you may find helpful

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