

## PEG Patient Support Group

**PINNT: a support group for patients receiving parenteral or enteral nutrition therapy**

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### **How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?**

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to or after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

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# Having A PEG (Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy) Tube

**Patient information leaflet**

**Safe & compassionate care,**

**every time**

## The Aim of the leaflet

This booklet has been written to help you and your family to come to a decision about having a PEG feeding tube

## What does PEG stand for?

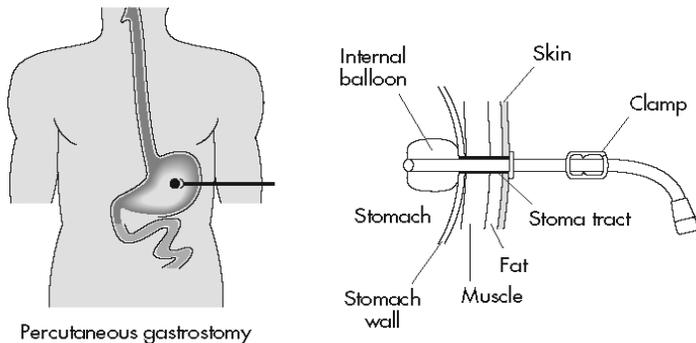
*Percutaneous* is the word used for something inserted through the skin

*Endoscopic* means that flexible camera is used to carry out the procedure

*Gastrostomy* is an opening into the stomach

A PEG – *percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy* - is a small feeding tube which goes through the skin directly into the stomach. A PEG is a way of introducing food, fluids and medicines directly into the stomach.

### Percutaneous gastrostomy



## Why PEG feeding?

A PEG tube bypasses the throat and gullet to feed people who cannot swallow safely in the usual way. It is also used to provide “top-up” food and fluids to people who can eat and drink but struggle to manage enough to keep them healthy. PEG feeding will not alter the outcome of your underlying disease or condition but will help to improve your nutrition.

## Would I be able to bath, shower or swim?

For the first two weeks, it is advisable to shower or wash with a cloth. After that, once the area round the tube has healed, it is perfectly acceptable to have a bath or go swimming. Always make sure you close the tube with the clip beforehand.

## Who looks after the tube?

It is important to consider this before the tube is placed. Giving feed and medication through the tube and care of the tube require daily attention. Some individuals manage the tube feed themselves, while others need support from relatives, carers and healthcare professionals.

## What feeding equipment is required?

Depending on how the feed is to be given, you may require

- An electronic feeding pump
- Syringes
- Connecting tubes (called giving sets)

You will be shown and taught how to use the equipment before you leave Hospital. You will receive monthly supplies of liquid feed, syringes and giving sets (if required). It is important to find a suitable place to store these supplies at home.

## Further questions

We hope that this leaflet will help you understand the reasons for inserting a PEG, how the procedure is performed and the risks and benefits. If having read this leaflet, you still have questions or concerns about the procedure then do not hesitate to talk to your doctor, nurse or Dietitian.

### How is the tube used to feed me?

The Dietitian will recommend a specially prepared liquid feed which contains all the nutrients you need in a day, for example, calories, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals. The liquid feed can be given by attaching a syringe to the tube or by using an electronic feeding pump. It is very important never to put anything down the tube other than feed, water or medication as advised, as it could cause the tube to block.

### How would it affect my life?

As with anything new, having a PEG may change your routine and may require you to consider different things. It may take time to adjust to these changes. Talk to your Dietitian on how best to include tube feeding into your existing lifestyle. The feeding regimen can be tailored to your individual needs.

### Would I still be able to eat and drink if I get a tube?

The medical team will advise you whether you are allowed anything to eat and drink. The tube can be used as the only source of nutrition if necessary. You can still clean your teeth and rinse your mouth even if you are not allowed to drink.

### How would I take my Medication?

If you are able to eat and drink, you may be able to swallow your medication. If this is not possible, medication can often be given in a liquid form down the feeding tube. Having the feeding tube can often make it easier to make sure you receive all your medication.

### What are the benefits of having a PEG tube?

Tube feeding can provide you with good nutrition, which can improve your sense of well being and help your body fight infection. Tube feeding can reduce any anxiety related to being unable to eat well throughout the day. Although tube feeding does not give the same pleasure as eating, it can relieve feelings of hunger or thirst.

### What are the risks and complications?

Although the procedure is relatively safe and major complications are rare, there are risks involved in passing the endoscope and in making a hole in the stomach for the tube. Should any major complications occur it may be necessary to consider an operation, but this may depend on the underlying diagnosis for which a PEG tube is needed.

There is a *major* complication rate of about 3% (i.e. three out of every 100 patients may experience these). This includes:

- Breathing problems either during or after the procedure.
- Bleeding
- Perforation of the bowel.
- Inflammation/infection in the abdomen.

Minor complications occur in about 20% (twenty out of every 100) of cases. These are mostly related to infection around the site of the tube and leakage from the site of the tube. These problems can usually be easily treated. It is important that you are aware of and understand the risks before you agree to have a PEG tube inserted. A member of the medical team will discuss this with you.

Before the procedure is carried out, you will be asked to sign a consent form.

### How is the gastrostomy tube placed in the stomach?

The tube insertion will be done in the Endoscopy Unit, and a nurse from that unit will look after you during your stay there. Please ensure a friend or relative can accompany you as you should not drive for 24 hours after this procedure.

You will not be allowed to eat or drink for six hours prior to the procedure but clear fluids (water) may be taken up to two hours before the procedure. If you are being fed by a nasogastric feeding tube this will need to be switched off six hours before.

### What Happens in the procedure room

- A small cannula (needle) will be placed into a vein in your hand or arm to allow us to give you the sedation required.
- The procedure only takes 15-20 minutes and is not painful. You will be given a sedative injection (not a general anaesthetic) to make you drowsy. A mouth guard will be put in your mouth to prevent you from accidentally biting your tongue or the endoscope.
- The doctor will pass an endoscope (a small flexible tube with a light) through your mouth and down to your stomach to locate the right area to place the PEG tube. An antiseptic solution will be used to clean the skin over your stomach. A local anaesthetic will be injected to numb the area where the tube will be placed. A small cut will then be made in the numbed skin to insert the tube.

- You will be transferred to the recovery area of the department for about 45 minutes, and from there back to the ward or if you are going straight home, you will be kept in recovery for about 4 hours after the procedure.
- Although you will feel some pressure and prodding over your stomach, you should not feel any pain.

Some people experience discomfort around the tube for a day or so after its insertion. Take your normal pain relief, such as Paracetamol, following dosage instructions, to control this.

### Would the PEG be permanent?

Again, this varies from person to person. Some people use their PEG tube long-term. For others, it is a temporary measure and once they are able to eat and drink enough and safely, it can be removed by the Endoscopy team.

### How long does a PEG tube last?

Depending on tube types, it could last between 9 months to two years. After this time, it will need to be changed. This procedure can be done in the Endoscopy unit usually without the need for an overnight stay. In this Trust we use FREKA PEG tubes. These tubes are made from polyurethane, which is compatible with the human body and, if the tube is well cared for, it can last for a few years.