Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG)

Nursing and Clinical Governance
Why do I need a feeding tube?

You may be due to have planned surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy, or you may have difficulties with your swallowing. The team looking after you are concerned that you may not receive enough nourishment and this may then affect your recovery and healing.

With your permission, we will place a small tube directly into your stomach through the skin of the upper abdomen. Liquid feed can then be fed through the tube, to give you total nourishment or to supplement what you are able to eat.

What is a percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG)?

A gastrostomy is a narrow tube placed through the skin into your stomach. Percutaneous endoscopic placement, is the method used, using a flexible instrument called a gastroscope to place the feeding tube. About 10cm of tube will be on the outside of your stomach, this will be used to give you liquid food directly into your stomach, and this may be given several times a day or overnight. When the tube is not being used, it can be taped to your stomach under your clothing.

Are there risks or complications?

- There may be slight risk to crowned or dental bridgework, and you should tell the doctor if you have either of these.

- Occasionally, a problem arises because the PEG tube damages the stomach or bowel and leads to a leak of stomach contents. These unusual complications can require special treatment including an operation. The risk of this happening is less than 1%.

- An infection can occur at the point where the PEG tube passes through the skin and antibiotics may be given to reduce this risk or treat any infection that occurs.

- Occasionally, the PEG site may bleed but this is easily managed.

- On rare occasions a chest infection can develop after the procedure needing treatment with antibiotics.
Are there any alternatives?

There are a few different ways to place a feeding tube, we will discuss the most suitable options and methods of insertion with you.

Who will be doing the procedure?

A Consultant gastroenterologist will insert the feeding tube.

Where will the procedure take place?

The procedure will take place in the endoscopy unit.

What precautions do I need to take to prepare for my procedure?

■ You will need to be an inpatient in hospital.

■ On the day of the procedure, you should have nothing to eat for six hours before the procedure.

■ You may drink clear fluids up to 2 hours before and take any prescribed medication as normal.

■ If you are on warfarin or any blood thinning drugs please let us know before your admission.

■ An MRSA screen will be performed (see MRSA information leaflet).

■ A blood test will be done to check that you do not have an increased risk of bleeding.

■ If you have any allergies you must let the doctor know.

■ You will be asked to change into a hospital gown, but may leave underwear on.
What actually happens during the procedure?

- You will be transported to the department on a bed.
- During the procedure we will monitor your blood pressure, pulse and oxygen saturations.
- Your throat will be sprayed with a local anaesthetic.
- You will then be helped into a comfortable position resting on your left hand side.
- To protect your mouth a plastic guard will be placed between your teeth and gums.
- You will have a cannula (a short plastic tube) placed into a vein in your arm so that you can receive a sedative, a dose of antibiotics and pain relief during the procedure.
- The sedative will make you feel sleepy and relaxed.
- The gastroscope, which has a bright light on the end of it, will be gently introduced into your mouth, over the back of your tongue and down into your stomach.
- A local anaesthetic will then be injected to numb the skin on your upper abdomen.
- A small opening will be made into the stomach.
- The PEG tube will go over your tongue and down into your stomach and gently eased through the small opening in your abdomen.
- The PEG tube is then secured.

Will it Hurt?

You should not feel any pain, as we will give you sedation and painkillers before we start. This is tailored to your needs, should you need any extra medication, it will be available.

How long will it take?

The procedure takes about twenty minutes.
What happens afterwards?

■ A nurse will escort you to your ward. You will be asked to stay in your bed until your sedation has worn off.

■ The ward nurses will check your blood pressure, pulse and the feeding tube site at regular intervals.

■ Your throat and stomach may feel sore for a few days, and you may feel a little bloated.

■ This discomfort will pass but sometimes you may need mild pain relieving medication.

■ Your dietitian will assess the type and amount of feed you need each day.

■ You may be able to learn how to administer the tube feeding yourself or someone may need to do it for you.

■ Before you are discharged, you or your carer will be shown how to care for your tube, the skin around the tube and how to administer your feeds.

■ This will be done by the ward staff and the Nutrition nurses.

■ When not in use the tube can easily be secured to the skin.

■ You will receive support from the district nurse and feed company nurse if you need it.

If you have any questions about the procedure please telephone the Nutrition nurses.

Consultant (who’s care you are under).

Further information

■ BAPEN – British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition, www.bapen.org.uk

■ P.I.N.N.T – Patients on intravenous and naso-gastric nutrition therapy, www.pinnt.com
Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) NHS Foundation Trust fully subscribes to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) *Being Open* best practice framework, November 2010.

**PALS and Advocacy contact details**

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located in far left corner as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757  
**Email:** rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net  
**Opening hours:** 9.00am–4.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.