

Radiologically Inserted Gastrostomy (RIG)

Nursing and Patient Experience



Patient information leaflet

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/water and medication can then be given through the tube, to give you total nourishment or to supplement what you are able to eat.

What is a radiologically inserted gastrostomy (RIG)?

A gastrostomy is a narrow tube placed through the skin into your stomach. Radiological insertion is a technique using x-ray to insert and check the tube is in the correct position.

About 10cm in length of tube will be on the outside of your stomach, this will be used to give you liquid food directly into your stomach, 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?

Complications following the procedure are unusual.

- Bleeding and infection are potential risks with any medical procedure.
- Very rarely a blood vessel can be punctured accidentally when placing the tube into the stomach. However, this is a rare complication. This can result in bleeding. It may stop by itself, or you may need some intervention, this may include a blood transfusion.
- The tube tract may develop a leak. The skin around the tube can become very red and sore. If this happens it may become necessary to remove the tube for healing to occur. You need to keep the area around the tube clean and dry.
- Occasionally a problem arises because the RIG tube damages the stomach or bowel. These unusual complications can require special treatment including an operation.

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 radiologist will insert the feeding tube.

Where will the procedure take place?

The procedure will be done in the x-ray department, in a special "screening" room.

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

- You will need to be an inpatient in the hospital.
- On the day of your procedure, you should have nothing to eat for six hours before the procedure.
- You may drink clear fluids up to two hours before and take any prescribed medication as normal.
- If you are taking Warfarin or any blood thinning drugs please telephone us before your appointment.
- An MRSA screen will be performed (see MRSA 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 you may leave your underwear on.

What actually happens during the procedure?

- You will be transported to the department on a bed.
- For the examination you will lay flat on your back on an x-ray couch.
- During the procedure we will monitor your blood pressure, pulse and Oxygen Saturations.
- 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 to ease anxiety and discomfort.
- A fine nasogastric tube will be placed via your nose and into your stomach so that some air can be introduced into your stomach. This helps the doctor to see your stomach.

- The skin just below your ribs will be swabbed with antiseptic fluid and your body covered with sterile towels. There will be staff in the room to look after you and to operate the x-ray equipment.
- The skin and deeper tissue over your stomach just below your ribs will be numbed with local anaesthetic. Two – four special button ties will be inserted into your stomach. These ties hold the stomach wall to the skin. (The ties will stay in place for about 10-14 days. By this time the tract for the feeding tube will be well formed).
- The feeding tube is then inserted and fixed to the skin. The tube has a water filled balloon that stays in your stomach to prevent it falling out.
- Your “nose” tube is usually removed before your return to the ward.

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?

This procedure usually takes 30-45 minutes. Expect to be in the department 60-90 minutes.

What happens afterwards?

1. A nurse will escort you to your ward. You will be asked to stay in your bed until your sedation has worn off.
 2. The ward nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse, and the feeding tube site at regular intervals.
 3. The tube will be flushed with water.
 4. Your stomach may feel sore for a few days and you may feel a little bloated. The 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 feed 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 feed company nurse if you need it.

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

Further information

- BAPEN – British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition
www.bapen.org.uk
- www.mndassociation.org
- www.macmillan.org.uk
- www.stroke.org.uk

Contact details

X-ray Department

Telephone: 01483 464150

Radiology Department Nurses

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 4205

Dietitians

Telephone: 01483 464119

Nutrition Nurses

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 2598

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 on the right hand side 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–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

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

Past review date: November 2017

Future review date: November 2020

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PIN171127–1346

