

For more information please visit us online at: <http://www.osmh.on.ca/diagnostics/>

If you or your support person do not clearly understand the procedure, please ask for clarification



NASOGASTRIC AND NASOJEJUNAL FEEDING TUBES

What is it?

Nasogastric (NG) and Nasojejunal (NJ) tubes are soft, flexible tubes inserted through the nose and passed down into the stomach (NG) or small intestine (NJ). They are used to provide nutrition, fluids, or medications when swallowing is difficult or unsafe. These tubes can also be used to remove stomach contents in certain conditions. NG/NJ tubes are typically temporary and are managed by healthcare professionals. Proper care and cleaning of the tube and surrounding area are important to prevent irritation or infection.

Why do I need it¹?

You may require an NG or NJ tube for the following reasons:

- **Decompressing the Stomach:** NG tubes are commonly used to relieve stomach pressure in cases of bowel obstruction, reducing symptoms like abdominal pain, distension, nausea, and the risk of vomiting and aspiration.
- **Preventing Aspiration:** NG tubes may be placed for severe or persistent nausea/vomiting to prevent aspiration.
- **Administering Nutrition/Medications:** NG tubes can provide nutrition or medications to patients unable to swallow, such as after a stroke. Long-term feeding may require a more permanent tube.
- **GI Bleeding:** NG tubes are sometimes used to help diagnose upper GI bleeding.



HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

Before

For specific questions regarding the clinical need for this procedure, please contact your ordering provider.

Patient Preparation:

You should wear loose-fitting clothing that is easy to change out of. **You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home after you have recovered from the procedure.** One support person (spouse, friend, caregiver, family member) may accompany you on the day of your appointment, but not into the procedure room.

Please bring a list of the medications you are currently taking and a list of any drug/medication allergies you may have.

You can eat and drink normally before the procedure. You may take your usual medications prior to the procedure. See next page if you take blood thinners.

Please phone the Diagnostic Imaging booking line at **705-325-2201 ext. 3505** for cancellations or rebooking if you are unable to attend your appointment.

Bloodwork:

Bloodwork is not required for NG or NJ tube insertions

Medication:

You do not need to stop any medications or blood thinners for this procedure



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Coming To The Hospital

You must first sign-in with **Centralized Patient Scheduling & Registration (CPSR)**, which is located immediately to your left when you enter the hospital from the main entrance (off Dunlop Street, across from the gift shop). You will receive a patient wristband and be directed to the **Diagnostic Imaging department**.

Please bring to the hospital your OHIP card and a list of current medications you are taking.

During

This procedure is performed in the Interventional Radiology Department of Diagnostic Imaging.

The duration of your appointment time will vary from 20 minutes – 60 minutes.

1. You will be asked to remove your clothing from above and below the waist and put on a hospital gown.
2. A Medical Radiation and Imaging Technologist (MRIT) will explain the procedure and answer any questions you have before the procedure.
3. You will lie on your back on a fluoroscopy table.
4. A radiologist will apply a numbing gel to the inside of one of your nostrils. They will also use a numbing spray on the back of your throat.
5. Using fluoroscopy, the radiologist will guide the NG or NJ tube through your nostril, down your throat, and into your stomach or small bowel (just beyond the stomach).
6. The tube will be taped in place to the side of your nose
7. **Note:** This procedure generally **does not use conscious sedation** as you may be required to actively swallow to help guide the tube down.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER



Recovery & Going Home

You may leave once the procedure is completed, as long as you are feeling well.

We recommend having someone drive you home after the procedure.

Don't drive if you are taking strong pain medicine. If you were given medication to help you relax or manage pain during the procedure (not common), then you cannot drive for the next 24 hours.



Diet & Activity

- Rest for the remainder of the day.
- Have an adult family member, caregiver, or friend stay with you the night after the procedure in case you need help.
- The radiologist will advise you when you may start using the feeding tube or when you may resume your regular diet.
- You may resume light activities after 24 hours, but be mindful of the new tube that is in place. Be careful not to catch or snag the portion of tube coming out of your nostril.

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Wound Care²

- You will need to take care of the area around your nose and the tube to prevent infection. If you are not under the direct care of a doctor or healthcare provider then we will contact Ontario Health atHome (Home Care) on your behalf to arrange for general care and bandage changes. However, you may wish to learn how to care for and use the tube yourself.

Keeping the Tube Clean:

- Wash your hands before and after handling the tube.
- Flush the tube with a syringe of warm water 4 times daily to prevent clogging.
- Clean around the nose and the outside of the tube with mild soap and water.
- Check with your doctor or healthcare provider if feeding supplies can be reused. If so, wash them in warm, soapy water and let them air dry.

Ensuring the Tube is Secure:

- Make sure the tube is securely taped to your nose or cheek. Check it is still in place before each feeding.
- Avoid pushing or pulling on the tube. Mark the tube where it exits your nose to monitor its position.
- Monitor the area around the tube for signs of infection, such as redness, sores, drainage, or dryness.



Bathing

- Be careful when bathing so the tube and tape around your nose do not get wet.
- Do not submerge the tube underwater.
- **Ontario Health atHome (Home Care) will be able to assist you with bathing techniques to protect your tube.**



Medication

- **If your doctor or healthcare provider advised you to stop any medications for this procedure then consult with them first about the safety of when you can start your medications again;**
- Otherwise, resume your normal medication schedule.



Special Instructions³

At-Home Care for a Feeding Tube:

- Follow your doctor's or healthcare provider's instructions for using and caring for the feeding tube.
- Use the formula and fluids recommended by your doctor or healthcare provider, and store opened formula in the refrigerator.
- Keep the area around the tube clean and watch for signs of infection or blockage.
- Check with your doctor or healthcare provider about which activities are safe to do.

For Caregivers:

- Always wash your hands before handling the tube or formula. Clean the top of the formula can before opening.
- For stomach feedings (NG tube), keep the person sitting up during feeding and for 30-60 minutes afterward. Feedings can be done 5-6 times daily, over 30 minutes each time.
- For intestine feedings (NJ tube), a pump will slowly deliver formula over several hours, often overnight.
- If nausea, cramps, or diarrhea occur, slow down the feeding rate and gradually increase it as tolerated.

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Special Instructions³ (Continued)

- Flush the tube with water after each feeding to keep it clear. Only put formula or water through the tube unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.
- If instructed, check the pH of stomach contents using a syringe and test strip. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if the pH is above 5.5.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP¹



Call 911:

If you believe you require emergency care – **call 911**. Reasons to call 911 include:

- You have passed out (lose consciousness), or become very dizzy, weak, or less alert
- You experience sudden chest pain and shortness of breath; and/or
- You have severe trouble breathing
- You have a fast or uneven pulse



Call your doctor, healthcare provider, or Health Connect Ontario immediately if you experience^{2,3}:

- Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness around the tube.
- Red streaks leading from the area where the tube is inserted.
- Pus draining from the tube area.
- A fever (more than 100°F / 38°C).
- Chills, with or without fever.
- The tube comes out or becomes blocked.
- Your tube leaks.
- You have nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- You have new or worse belly pain, stomach pain, or cramps
- You have any problems with your feeding.

Health Connect Ontario may be reached 24-hours a day, including weekends, by:

- Calling 8-1-1
- Calling 1-866-797-0007 (TTY – *teletypewriter service*)
- Visiting <https://healthconnectontario.health.gov.on.ca/> and selecting “Chat with us”

BRING THIS INFORMATION PACKAGE WITH YOU SHOULD YOU URGENTLY NEED TO SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GO TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OF YOUR NEAREST HOSPITAL.

Use this material for your information only. It does not replace advice from your doctor or other health care professionals. Do not use this information for diagnosis or treatment. Consult with your health care provider about a specific medical condition.

References:

1. Sigmon DF, An J. Nasogastric Tube. [Updated 2022 Oct 31]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2024 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK556063/>
2. How to care for a nasogastric tube. Accessed October 15, 2024. Lexi-Comp Online. <https://online.lexi.com/>
3. Home Tube Feeding: Care Instructions. Accessed October 15, 2024. My Alberta Health. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/AfterCareInformation/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=uh4017>

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