

What is a PEG tube?

A percutaneous gastrostomy (PEG) tube may be placed in anticipation of other treatments such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy, allowing the patient to adapt to its use prior to treatment. This type of feeding tube is placed directly into the stomach through the abdominal wall.

Will the procedure hurt?

A PEG tube is painful initially, but the pain will resolve with time (7-10 days). The tube is not easily visible when wearing clothes. When not in use, they can simply be taped to the patient's abdomen to prevent them from moving around under clothing.

What is a PEG tube placement?

PEG tubes are placed with the aid of a small tube through the nose. The small tube will be inserted via the nose and down the throat to distend the stomach with air. The procedure takes about 20 minutes. The PEG tube extends from the interior of the stomach to outside the body through a small incision only slightly larger than the tube itself in the abdominal wall. The tube is prevented from coming out of the stomach by one of several methods. Some brands have a small suture within the tube, which after insertion is pulled from the exterior end of the tubing causing the portion within the stomach to curl up or "pigtail," preventing it from being pulled out. Other systems employ a small balloon at the end of the tube which is inflated within the stomach after insertion, serving the same purpose. Removal of the tube simply involves cutting the wire which crated the pigtail, or deflating the balloon section of the tube allowing it to slip easily from the stomach. About three inches of tubing will protrude from the incision area. Initially, there may be some discomfort while getting used to the system, from gas or air, or from adjusting to the liquid foods themselves.

The lifespan of the feeding tube is about six months. When the tubing begins to wear out, it may pull away from the stomach wall and cause leakage near the insertion point. The replacement process is relatively simple. Typically, the tubing is merely pulled out through the stomach site and then replaced with a new one.

How to care for the PEG tube?

Keep a dressing over the PEG tube site until there is no drainage from around the tube. You can take a shower but do not take a tub bath. If you notice redness, tenderness, or drainage at the site, clean it more often. If the symptoms improve continue the extra care for one week and then resume normal care. If the symptoms do not improve or worsen, call your doctor immediately.

Medication Instructions for all Interventional Procedures:

- You must be off your blood thinners for 5 days prior to procedure. These medications include aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin (Warfarin), and Pletal. If you are on any of these medicines, please inform the doctor that prescribed them before stopping them. Please notify your West Cancer Center nurse or doctor if they are not aware you are taking these medicines. If you have any questions regarding your meds, including if they are blood thinners, please call **901-922-6707**.
- Take any additional routine medications the day of the procedure. If you are on insulin ask your doctor about any adjustments that may be needed.
- Your arrival time is 1 ½ hours prior to your procedure. We will need the additional time to do necessary lab tests, start an IV, ask pre-procedural questions and do a nursing assessment.
- Following the procedure you will need to recover in a bed at our facility for 4 to 6 hours before going home.

You will need someone to drive you home. You will not be allowed to drive yourself. If you do not have someone to drive you your test will be rescheduled. You cannot use public transportation.