

Nasogastric (NG) Tube

Nasogastric Tube

During surgery, your cancer care team will place a nasogastric tube, or an NG tube. The NG tube allows you to get food, fluids and medicine without causing pain or slowing your healing. The NG-tube goes through your nose and down the back of your throat into your stomach. The tube is secured in place to prevent it from being accidentally removed. You should have your NG tube removed before you go home from the hospital. If the tube needs to stay in place longer after your discharge from the hospital, the dietitian on your cancer care team will show you how to feed yourself through the NG-tube. We will set up the supplies you will need for tube feeding before you go home.

When to Call for Help

If you have difficulties with your NG-tube, call us at 801-587-4566. Call immediately if you:

- Have any pain with breathing or during your feedings.
- Feel resistance and are unable to move fluids through the tube.
- Feel bloated or too full.
- Have bloody or black bowel movements.
- See blood in vomit.

Tips for Using Your NG-Tube

- Be sure to flush your tube with water after feedings and medications.
- Do the swallowing exercises your speech therapist gives you. Continue to do these things even if it is not comfortable. They keep your swallowing muscles strong. If you have questions or concerns, call your doctor or speech therapist.
- An NG-tube may cause you to breathe out of your mouth more often. This can dry out your mouth. Rinse your mouth with warm saltwater to help prevent infection and make you feel better.
- To keep your lips from getting dry and chapped you can use petroleum jelly or any lip balm.
- DO NOT put anything but water and formula in your feeding tube. Other liquids or pureed foods can clog it.