Gastrostomy Care

While in Care (respite / childcare / kinder / in home care)

The Royal
Children's
Hospital
Melbourne

Every child's gastrostomy care regime will be different and may change frequently. Always ask the parents/guardians what their usual regime for caring for the child's gastrostomy is.

Detailed gastrostomy care information is available on your smartphone

- Download RCH Family Healthcare Support app available for Android or Apple
- Under the section 'Foundation' is a section 'Gastrostomy tube'

Additional information

- In addition to cleaning, turn the tube all the way around daily
  - **DO NOT turn if the child has a GJ tube**
- When drying, try not to rub the area, instead pat dry or use a cotton tip
  - Do not try to dry granulation tissue, instead dry the surrounding skin
  - Use an absorbent dressing if advised by the parents.
    These should be changed promptly when wet.
- If the child has a balloon device, do **NOT** routinely check the balloon. If the device seems loose or is leaking more than usual, the balloon volume can be checked by a trained professional, or parent/guardian, if available. Check with the parents the specific volume, as it will be different for every child.
- A barrier cream/film and an absorbent dressing should be applied for leakage and site irritation. Ask the parents what they would normally use, and commence use without delay.

What to do if the tube falls out

A tube needs to be placed in the stoma as soon as possible to prevent it from closing (ideally less than 60 minutes).

- Keep the gastrostomy tube, even if broken
- Contact the parents to decide who will replace a device
  - Parent or another trained professional can attend the facility to reinsert
  - Alternatively, the child needs to be sent to RCH/local hospital
- If attending RCH;
  - During clinic hours.
    - Attempt to make a same-day appointment with the PEG clinic by calling 93456180
  - If unable to contact or no appointments are available, please attend the Emergency Department
- While awaiting device replacement, cover the stoma with a dressing to absorb and minimise leakage

In most cases, an individually written care plan is NOT required, and this document should suffice. If an individual care plan is required, generally the parent should fill in the plan and can have this signed off by their Paediatrician, GP, Gastroenterologist, or PEG service.

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