

We're here to help

We have Community Children's Nurses covering East and North Hertfordshire. The team work closely with primary care and other agencies to help achieve the highest quality of care for families. We are available for support and advice Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

The service offers care and support for children who need nursing care within their home and other community settings. These include children with:

- Chronic, life-limiting and special needs and palliative care needs
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Enteral Feeding
- Respiratory Conditions
- Rheumatology conditions, such as arthritis
- Acute conditions that require follow-up

We aim to:

- Shorten hospital stay and prevent readmission
- Help the child and family to meet their own care needs

Useful Telephone Numbers

Community Children's Nursing Team	☎ 01438 288370
Dietician	☎ 01438 284113
Abbott - Hospital 2 Home	☎ 01438 284113

Parent Information

Caring for your child with a nasogastric tube at home

Community Children's Nursing Team

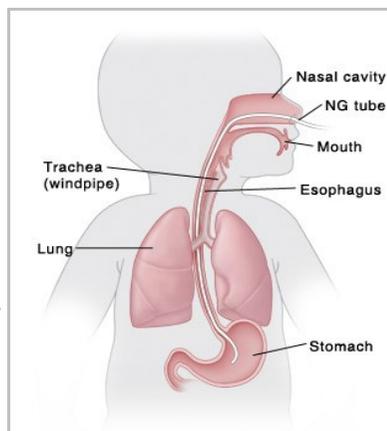


What is a nasogastric tube?

A nasogastric (NG) tube is a long thin flexible tube. These come in different lengths and sizes. The NG tube is passed through the nostril down to the stomach and is used for giving liquid feed and medicines.

Your child may have been sent home with a nasogastric tube for a number of different reasons. These include poor weight gain, an unsafe swallow or to make sure they have enough fluids.

For use at home (out of hospital) the long-term tubes (Nutricare) need changing every 3 months and the short-term tubes need changing every 30 days. Your NG tubes, pH paper and enteral syringes are supplied by your dietician, who should arrange a regular supply for you via Abbott (see contact details on back page). **Please ensure you always have at least one spare tube at all times.**



Confirming the position of the NG tube before use:

- Check the tube is in at the correct measurement (number marking) at the nostril.
- Aspirate a small amount of stomach content with a 20ml or 50ml syringe.
- Test the stomach contents on a pH indicator strip.
- If the pH reading is between 1—5.5 there is presence of acid in the stomach, it is then safe to commence with feeding.

What if I cannot get a pH reading or it is a high pH reading?

- Some medications, e.g. anti-reflux medicine, may cause a higher pH reading. This should be discussed with a medical professional to check what to do if this happens.
- If you cannot get any stomach content when aspirating try to reposition the child and attempt to aspirate again.

- If this does not work, contact the Community Children's Nursing (CCN) Team or go to Children's Emergency Department (ED).
- **NEVER** attempt to use the tube if you are unsure of its position or on the pH level.

Dressings

A dressing will help to secure the NG tube to your child's face. You may change your child's dressing at home if required. Ensure the NG tube is held secure whilst doing so. Additional supplies can be obtained from your GP or the CCN Team.

Very important things to remember

- If you do not check the tube and PH before a feed, you could increase the risk of aspiration - fluid going the wrong way into the child's lungs. This can have serious consequences.
- If your child begins to vomit, retch or cough during a feed, stop feeding and re-check the tube's PH.
- If the tube is due to be changed, please do not attempt to feed your child approximately 1-2 hours before the procedure, as this could increase the risk of them vomiting then possibly aspirating.

What to do if the NG tube comes out

- Do not attempt to repass the NG tube, unless you have been trained by a healthcare professional to do so.
- If the tube comes out, call the Community Children's Nurses as soon as possible. Please note, the CCNs may be out on a visit so you will need to leave a voice message. If you have not heard back within one hour, please go to your local hospital Emergency Department (ED) to have the NG tube replaced.
- If the tube comes out at a weekend or out of office hours, please go to Children's ED.
- To speed up the process whilst in ED, please take the correct size NG tube with you, a syringe, pH paper and the correct dressings.