Gastrostomy Tube

What is a gastrostomy tube?
A gastrostomy tube is a tube placed into the stomach through the skin that can be used for giving fluid, nutrition, or medications. It can also be used for drainage. There is a balloon on the tube inside the stomach that prevents it from falling out.

How is a gastrostomy tube placed?
You will arrive early for your procedure so that a nurse can check you in and you can speak with a doctor to make sure all of your questions are answered. Once you are ready, the nurse will start an IV so that he/she can give you medications to be sure you are comfortable and pain free. A very thin tube or catheter about the size of a piece of spaghetti will be passed down the nose into the stomach. Once that is in place, the area over the stomach will then be sterilized and the doctor will numb the area with local anesthetic. The doctor then uses real-time x-ray and/or ultrasound to guide the tube into the stomach. Once the tube is in place, there will be an external tube on the abdomen with a gauze dressing and the tube in the nose will be removed. The procedure commonly takes 1-2 hours and most people can go home the same day as their procedure.

Pre-Procedure Checklist
- You will need to pre-register before your appointment by calling 540-224-5200.
- Check in 1 hour and 30 minutes prior to your appointment time in the main lobby of Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital.
- You may not eat or drink after midnight the night before your procedure.
- You may take important medications (blood pressure, heart, etc) with a small sip of water.
- Please dress comfortably and leave your valuables at home.
- You need a responsible adult to drive you home and your doctor may want them to stay overnight with you.
- Bring a list of your medications with you for the nurse to review.
- If you are taking medications that thin your blood, you will need to consult the department for specific recommendations to decrease the risk of bleeding. You may call us at 540-981-7083 to speak with a nurse.
- You will need to drink oral contrast the night before your procedure. Please see below instructions.
Instructions for Taking Oral Contrast for Gastrostomy Tube Placement
 Barbarium Sulfate Suspension Readi-Cat 2

Shake the contrast well before drinking. It does not need to be refrigerated, but tastes better when cold. Begin drinking the contrast about 9 pm the night before your scheduled procedure. Drink one-third of the bottle every fifteen minutes until the entire bottle is consumed. Because you need to have nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before your procedure, you should finish drinking the contrast before midnight.

Immediately following your procedure

- No driving, operating heavy machinery, or making any important decisions for 24 hours.
- Light activity only for 24 hours after the tube is placed. Do not lift anything over 10 pounds.
- You may gradually resume your normal activity over the next few days.
- No food or drink for the first 24 hours after the tube is placed. Then you may start with light food. If you have no problems, you may progress to a regular diet.
- Avoid smoking or being around those who are smoking today.

How to Care for your gastrostomy tube

- Your referring doctor will let you know how the tube will be used.
- Keep the dressing clean and dry. Replace it if it becomes wet or dirty.
- The dressing must be changed at least once a week.
  1. Wash your hands.
  2. Remove the dirty dressing.
  3. Clean around the tube with soap and water, pat dry with a clean towel or gauze.
  4. Place a clean and secure dressing back on the tube. Be sure that the drain is well secured so that it does not get pulled accidentally.
  5. No bathing or swimming while the tube is in place.
- It is important to flush the tube very well after each use. Before placing crushed medications through the tube they should first be completely dissolved in a liquid.

What to report to your doctor

- If you become weak, faint, or dizzy
- The skin around the tube becomes painful, red, swollen, or hot
- Fevers greater than 101° F or chills
- Bleeding or swelling at the site
- If you develop severe pain
- If the tube has partially or completely come out

For additional information, please visit:
http://www.sirweb.org/patients/gastrostomy/
References:
www.mic-key.com/products/kc_mic_gastrostomy_feeding_tube.aspx

Interventional Radiology ∙ 1906 Belleview Ave, SE ∙ Roanoke, VA 24014 ∙ 540-981-7083
Hours of Operation: Mon – Fri 7 am to 5 pm
If you urgently need to speak with the Interventional Radiologist after hours, please contact the hospital operator at 540-981-7000 and the doctor can be paged.
In Case of Emergency, call 911.