

danuTips for Enteral Care

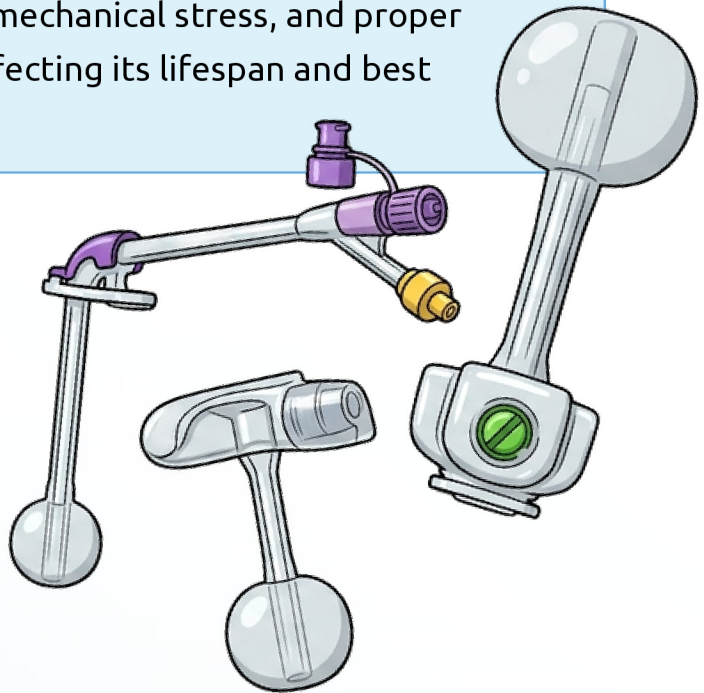


Maximizing the Lifespan of a Balloon Gastrostomy Tube

The **lifespan** of a balloon-style gastrostomy tube depends on **several critical factors**, including material degradation, mechanical stress, and proper maintenance. Here are the key factors affecting its lifespan and best practices to extend it:

Gastric Environment & Balloon Integrity

High gastric pH as well as bacterial or fungal colonization of the tube can **weaken** the balloon **material**, potentially leading to leaks or ruptures. Patients with **high gastric output** may experience faster balloon degradation and need more frequent replacements.



Activity Level & Mechanical Stress



Very **active patients** may encounter more accidental dislodgements or mechanical wear. Excessive pulling or tension on the tube may weaken the balloon and can lead to **premature failure**.



- ✓ Proper securement of the tube helps reduce mechanical stress.
- ✓ For low-profile devices (Buttons), stoma measurement and proper **sizing** of the tube will help ensure a correct and secure fit, thereby avoiding leakage or stoma-site complications.

Inflating your button

Use sterile water for inflation



Balloon Inflation and Maintenance

Over time, water can slowly **evaporate** or **leak** from the retention balloon, causing deflation and dislodgement. **Maintaining** appropriate balloon inflation is crucial for tube stability, placement, and a proper fit.

- ✓ **Weekly** assessment of the balloon's water volume is essential.
- ✓ Use the **recommended** amount of sterile water for inflation. Avoid overinflation and underinflation.

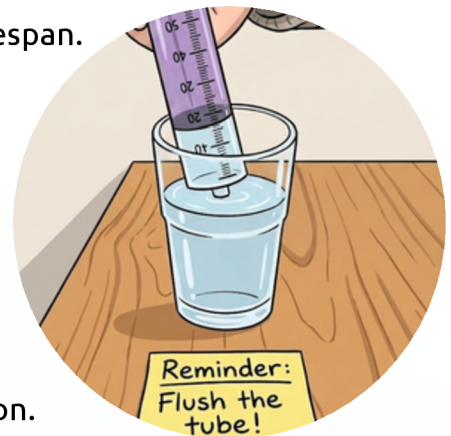


Sterile water is best for inflation, **NEVER** use saline, air, or acidic fluids. Also avoid using boiled tap water.

Tube Care & Handling

Proper care and handling of the tube are vital to **maintaining** its lifespan.

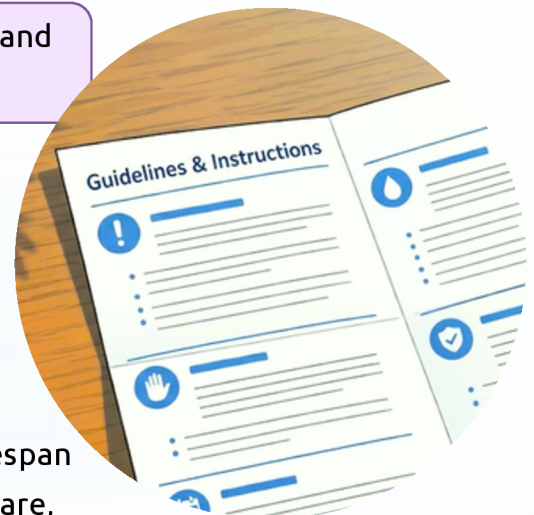
- ✓ Regular **flushing** with water prevents clogging and extends tube lifespan.
- ✓ Use of extension sets with Buttons for administration of feedings, water, and medication is essential to ensuring the lifespan of the tube.
- ✓ **Never** connect the enteral syringe directly to the Button feeding port as it will damage the anti-reflux valve of the Button.
- ✓ Always follow the manufacturer's guidelines for tube handling and maintenance.



Regular cleaning and hygiene help **prevent** infections and complications at the stoma site.

Follow Guidelines & Instructions

Always adhere to the **instructions**, recommendations and guidelines provided by your **healthcare provider** and the manufacturer of your gastrostomy tube. While manufacturers usually suggest tube replacement every three months, the lifespan of a balloon gastrostomy tube may be extended with proper care, including regular monitoring, flushing, and gentle handling.



Disclaimer: This information is not a substitute for professional medical care. In case of problems, complications, or questions, always contact your medical professional.

References:

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