

Gastrostomy Feeding Button

A gastrostomy feeding button is a device used to replace feeding tubes. The button sits just above the surface of the skin.

Before button placement/change:

Do not feed your child orally or through the gastrostomy for four hours before your appointment for button placement/change.

After button placement:

- You will need to watch the area around the gastrostomy button to be sure the skin color is pink—not white or red or inflamed. If inflammation, pus or increased bleeding occur around the button. Call your physician or clinic nurse at Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare.
- If your child has abdominal discomfort or is fussy after button placement or change, you may use Tylenol (acetaminophen) to relieve the discomfort.
- If your child has persistent nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fainting or black stools, call your physician.
- You may feed your child as soon as the new button has been placed.
- It is safe for your child to swim with the gastrostomy button.

Feeding procedure:

Feedings are similar to those given with a PEG or Foley gastrostomy, however, a special feeding tube is connected to the button to open the one-way valve.

The feeding tube used with the button will be supplied. Lift the tab on the button to insert the tube for feeding. Attach the syringe or bag to the tube and feed in the same way as before. After feeding, and flushing with water, remove the tube and reinsert the tab into the button. To clean the tube after feedings, rinse the tube thoroughly with at least 1/3 ounce of water to clear the tube after feedings.

Do not put a syringe directly into the button. This may damage the one-way valve.

Feedings should last at least 20 minutes to avoid abdominal distention and reflux. A feeding pump may also be used. Afterward, lower the syringe below the stomach level to allow any air to escape. Children who tend to vomit after feedings may need to have the tube left open to air for 30 minutes after the feeding. Then remove the feeding tube and close the tab.

If the button comes out, it is very important that another button or Foley catheter be inserted immediately to keep the gastrostomy stoma open. The Foley catheter may be used for feedings until another button is available. It may be necessary to use a smaller diameter Foley, if the button has been out for a while.

Ask your provider for a prescription for a replacement tube to keep at home. Even if you don't know how to place

the tube, having a new tube can save time in an emergency.

Giving medications:

Thick medications need to be diluted and pills need to be crushed and mixed with liquids so the tube does not become clogged. If there is a choice in size of connecting tubes, use the tube with the larger diameter for medicines. Give medicines at the beginning of the feeding to ensure the child receives the whole dose unless you have been directed to give the medication on a full stomach. Avoid medications in sprinkle form.

Cleaning the button:

Clean the area around the button with soap and water. You may bathe your child in the tub. Turn the button every day when you clean it. Never use alcohol around the button as it can irritate the skin. Do not use ointments or hydrogen peroxide unless instructed by your physician.

Maintaining the balloon:

For buttons with a balloon, it is not typically recommended that you check the water, unless advised by your doctor. Your doctor will tell you how much water to use. It is best to use distilled or sterile water in the balloon. Tap water may contain minerals which could cause the balloon to break. Call the clinic if the gastrostomy site looks sore or is tender to the touch. Call the clinic if it looks as if the button is getting too tight or too loose. It is common for the length of the button to change during periods of growth or weight gain.

Other helpful information may be found in the booklet that comes with your button kit.

[Make An Appointment](#) [651-290-8707](tel:651-290-8707) [Refer a Patient](#) [651-325-2200](tel:651-325-2200)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](tel:651-229-3890).