

## Department of Radiology

### INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY

#### Instructions to Patient/Family Regarding Care of Gastrostomy Catheters

You have been provided with a specialized catheter placed by the interventional radiologist to provide liquid feeding without an NG tube. Please read this sheet and save it for future reference.

**Information:** A gastrostomy catheter provides a route for liquid feeding into the stomach without the need for a tube through the nose or mouth. This method of feeding is designed for patients who have difficulty swallowing but whose gastrointestinal tract is functional. The catheter may be secured to the skin by an adhesive device to prevent accidental removal of the catheter. Initially, a dressing made of 4" x 4" gauze is placed over the fixation device and is taped or secured with a thin sheet of adhesive material called Cover-Roll Stretch. The catheter may also be taped to your skin just outside the dressing.

#### **Instructions:**

1. Do not begin use of the catheter until the day after it is placed.
2. ONLY LIQUIDS may be given through the catheter. Never try to give pureed foods, soup, ground-up medication tablets, or other suspensions through the catheter. Only the elixir form of medications may be given.
3. FLUSH the catheter with about 50cc of warm tap water at least 3 times a day.
4. Try to prevent tugging on the catheter.
5. Keep the dressing as dry as possible. When bathing, do not sit in water deep enough to immerse the catheter fixation device/dressing. If the dressing becomes wet for any reason, remove it and replace with new 4" x 4" gauze and tape, leaving the fixation device alone. (A slightly damp dressing exterior does not require changing.) You may also change the dressing as needed for cleanliness.
6. Keep the skin around the catheter clean. Slight accumulation of secretions around the catheter at the skin entry site are common and are not cause for concern. You may gently cleanse/remove any excess build-up (with Q-tips or gauze and hydrogen peroxide).
7. Please refer to the Gastrostomy Catheter Trouble-Shooting Guide for any problems you have with the catheter.
8. If you have any questions, please call the Interventional Radiology section at (510) 752-7573.