

Stomach Tubes after Water PowerPoint

Objective: To learn to construct and safely place a stomach tube in a patient for the purposes of feeding, hydrating, or administering medications.

Materials: IV tubing (non-sterile is o.k. as long as not blood contaminated); sharp knife; scissors; candle; matches; water-based lubricating jelly; tape; exam gloves; large syringe; 13-18 gauge needle for the syringe; clean water; commercial feeding tubes are helpful (they are easier to put down).

Preparation: None except for gathering materials. It may be helpful to read the procedures in the medical manual; Volume 1, Appendix 1A, #4 for making the tube and Appendix 1B #13 for inserting the tube.

Student steps:

1. Make a stomach tube according to the directions in Volume 1, Appendix A, Procedure 4.
2. Insert the stomach tube according to the directions in Appendix 1B, Procedure 13. It is preferable, if possible, to use a commercial feeding tube rather than your homemade tube. A commercial tube is easier to put down, not as uncomfortable for an awake and alert subject. Homemade tubes are perfectly adequate for use in Timbuktu.
3. Attach a large syringe with a large bore need top of the stomach tube and withdraw stomach contents.
4. Pull the plunger out of the syringe, and pour water down it. Hold the syringe up high and watch the water flow down into the stomach.

Guidelines:

- Students tend to make side holes on the tubing too large. They also tend to make holes right across from each other. Both of these weaken the tubing; a piece might break off in the stomach. If this happens, it is not a big tragedy. It will be passed in the stool within a few days.
- Students tend to leave the tubing end in the flame for too long. This makes the tubing end larger, making it more difficult to pass. The idea is to leave it in just long enough to soften the rough edges from where it was cut, no more. One or two seconds are plenty.
- Try to have a student volunteer as "patient" who has a medical history of having had a stomach tube. If none is forthcoming, then go for a macho man who will be ashamed to cry. More than any other lab, this lab tends to go either wonderfully or disastrously, depending on the success of the first student attempt.
- Have the student volunteer swallow water while the tube is being inserted.