

## Reference

1. White R, Bradnam V. Handbook of drug administration via enteral feeding tubes. Third edition. BPNG. London: Pharmaceutical Press. 2015.



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# Freka<sup>®</sup> Balloon Gastrostomy Feeding

CARE GUIDELINES

For Patients & Carers





<p><b>GP</b> Address Tel. / Fax / Email</p>
<p><b>Hospital Dietitian</b> Address Tel. / Fax / Email</p>
<p><b>Community Dietitian</b> Address Tel. / Fax / Email</p>
<p><b>Nutrition Nurse</b> Address Tel. / Fax / Email</p>
<p><b>District Nurse</b> Address Tel. / Fax / Email</p>
<p><b>Nutrition Feed Company/Nurse Advisor</b> Address Tel. / Fax / Email</p>
<p><b>Hospital Consultant</b> Address Tel. / Fax / Email</p>

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### Introduction

This booklet aims to provide you with information about your balloon gastrostomy feeding tube and to answer any questions. If you have additional questions or would like further explanation please contact your Nurse or Dietitian who will be able to help you. Please put this booklet in a safe place as you may wish to refer to it in the future. For additional information regarding your tube type please refer to the specific aftercare sheet.

### What is a balloon gastrostomy feeding tube?

A balloon gastrostomy feeding tube is a small feeding tube which is inserted directly into the stomach so that you can receive feed, fluid and medication without swallowing. It will provide you with a long-term method of obtaining nutrition.

### What is a button gastrostomy?

A button is a type of balloon gastrostomy feeding tube

that is more discreet (less visible) than a standard gastrostomy as it lies closer to the skin. It can be inserted in a person who has had a standard gastrostomy tube in place for at least 4 weeks or in line with local policy. Your healthcare professional will talk to you about the best type of balloon gastrostomy tube for you.

### How is the balloon gastrostomy feeding tube inserted?

Your balloon gastrostomy feeding tube will be placed into your stomach through the channel (or stoma) formed by your original gastrostomy tube. The stoma length will be measured if you are having a button gastrostomy inserted. Your healthcare professional will discuss this with you. Once inserted, the tube is held in place by a small retention balloon which is inflated with a specified amount of sterile water or 0.9% saline (the volume and type of fluid required will depend on tube you have placed). The fluid level in the Freka<sup>®</sup> Belly Button and the Freka<sup>®</sup> Gastrotube should be checked every week to prevent accidental removal of the balloon gastrostomy.

## Why do I need a balloon gastrostomy feeding tube?

You are currently unable to take enough food and fluid by mouth to meet all your nutritional needs. The balloon gastrostomy feeding tube will provide access for feed administration into your stomach.

## How long will the tube last?

The tube is made from silicone, which is compatible with the human body. If the tube is well cared for, the Freka<sup>®</sup> Belly Button and Freka<sup>®</sup> Gastrotube can last several months.

## How soon after tube insertion can I begin feeding?

Feeding can start immediately after tube placement, but this will be decided by your GP, Dietitian or Nurse. The feed is introduced slowly to begin with, so that your body can adjust to the feed.

## What feed will I receive?

Your dietitian will discuss the type of feed to use, usually you will receive a prescribed, commercially produced liquid feed which contains all the essential nutrients you will need on a daily basis.

You may receive part or all of your daily food via your balloon gastrostomy feeding tube, depending on your specific medical condition and needs.

You may also need extra fluids through your balloon gastrostomy feeding tube. Water can be administered using a syringe or administration set.

## Feeding regimen

Your Dietitian will prescribe the volume and rate of your feed to suit your needs. You may be fed intermittently or continuously during the day or overnight, depending on which is best for you.

Always follow the recommended regimen. If you have any problems with the feed you should inform your Dietitian.

To prevent heartburn and feed refluxing you should feed in an upright position. For overnight feeding you should use supporting pillows or a backrest. If you find this uncomfortable, you can raise the mattress at the head of the bed instead.

### Administration of nutrition and fluids using the Freka<sup>®</sup> extension sets (Freka<sup>®</sup> Belly Button only)

Feeds and fluids should be administered through a Freka<sup>®</sup> 30cm extension set. There is a valve in the Freka<sup>®</sup> Belly Button gastrostomy tube to prevent fluid leaking from your stomach. When flushing, the extension set should be used. Do not attach syringes or administration sets directly to the Freka<sup>®</sup> Belly Button gastrostomy tube as they may damage the valve.

### Tube Care

The balloon gastrostomy feeding tube should be flushed with at least 20ml of cooled, boiled water

before and after feed, or medicine administration, or as directed by your healthcare professional to prevent tube blockage. You should only use the tube to administer feed, water and liquid medicines.

### Administration of medicines<sup>1</sup>

Solutions or soluble tablets are the formulations of choice as they allow for accurate dosing. The same applies to self medication (e.g. for headache) and your pharmacist will recommend a liquid form of pain relief.

Sustained-release tablets/capsules are unsuitable for administration via an enteral feeding tube as they are designed to be released slowly. Crushing may result in the whole dose being released at once.

Medication with enteric coatings should not be crushed and given via your balloon gastrostomy tube as they are likely to cause tube blockage.

If giving more than one medication, they should be given separately and the tube should be flushed in between. For further advice, please contact your Pharmacist or Nutrition Nurse.

## Methods of flushing the tube

Using ENFit<sup>®</sup> syringe for flushing.



1. Connect the ENFit syringe to the medication port of the giving set. Turn the medication port to 90° in order to administer water or medication.



2. Connect ENFit syringe and secure to the tube.

## Checking the fluid in the balloon gastrostomy

The amount of water in the Freka<sup>®</sup> Belly Button and Freka<sup>®</sup> Gastrotube should be checked regularly, at least once a week.

Hold the tube in position with your thumb and index finger and insert a 10ml luer syringe into the retention balloon valve mounted on the side. Withdraw the fluid. Do not remove the tube from stoma channel.

Check the amount of fluid and if it is less than the required amount replace it with the recommended fill volumes of sterile water (or 0.9% saline if using the Freka<sup>®</sup> Gastrotube). The volume required is dependent upon the size of your tube, (see table on page 5). If the amount of fluid in the balloon remains below the recommended volume, contact your local healthcare professional.

It is important not to underfill or overfill the retention balloon - please refer to the filling volumes in the table on page 5.

Freka Balloon Tube size FR/CH	Recommended Filling Volume
12	3ml
14	4ml
15	5 - 7.5ml
16	5ml
18	5ml
20	8ml
24	8ml

## Skincare

Always keep the outer surface of the tube and skin around the entry site dry. Clean daily with warm water and mild soap and then dry thoroughly. Your healthcare professional will advise you on any local policy regarding stoma care. Routinely check the entry site for redness, swelling and granulation tissue. If any skin changes are noticed, consult your healthcare professional. If you have pain or continued discomfort you should seek advice from your local healthcare professional.

You should rotate the balloon gastrostomy a full circle (360°) each day. This will help maintain a healthy stoma.

If you notice any redness, heat, swelling, exudate, discomfort or pain you should contact your Nurse or GP.

If you notice feed leakage around the stoma site you should stop feeding and contact your healthcare professional.

If you experience nausea, vomiting or constipation you should contact your healthcare professional immediately for advice.

## Replacement of a balloon gastrostomy

Your balloon gastrostomy will be replaced according to your local hospital replacement policy.

If you gain or lose weight you may need to have the length of your button adjusted.

### Removal of a balloon gastrostomy tube

To remove or replace the balloon gastrostomy tube, the water is withdrawn from the retention balloon by attaching a syringe to the side valve and the tube is then gently withdrawn through the stoma.

Cover the site with a suitable adhesive dressing until the stoma closes. If the tube is to be replaced, a new balloon gastrostomy tube is gently pushed into the stoma and the retention balloon is inflated with the specified amount of sterile water (or 0.9% saline if using Freka<sup>®</sup> Gastrotube). Your healthcare professional will provide advice on this.

If your Freka<sup>®</sup> Belly Button tube is removed and is not being replaced with another tube, a period of 12 hour fasting is required

### Frequently asked questions

#### **Can I swim, bath or shower?**

Ask your healthcare professional about how soon you can swim, bath or shower after your the site has healed. Ensure the clamp is closed. Thoroughly dry the area afterwards.

#### **How long will the tube last?**

This will depend upon the type of tube you have had placed. Your healthcare professional can provide this information. Following the aftercare information will help to prolong the life of the tube.

#### **Who do I contact if the tube gets damaged or I get a problem with the site?**

Contact your local healthcare professional.

#### **Can I go on holiday?**

Enteral feeding does not stop you going on holiday but it is a good idea to have a letter from your doctor and make sure you have the necessary insurance. Contact your local healthcare professional for advice about replacement tubes and information regarding the supply of your feed.

### If I cannot eat what will happen to my mouth?

Plaque can build up very quickly so it is important to brush your teeth at least twice a day. A mouthwash or artificial saliva may help if your mouth is dry.

### Are there any patient support groups available?

**PINNT** - Patients on Intravenous and Nasogastric Nutrition Therapy

PINNT supports people on enteral and parenteral nutrition, providing advice and local support groups.

PINNT contact information:-  
**[www.pinnt.com](http://www.pinnt.com)**

## Accessory items

