GASTROSTOMY TUBE FEEDING

What is a gastrostomy tube?

A gastrostomy tube is a rubber feeding tube that enters the stomach through the skin. It goes directly into the stomach to deliver food and water to the patient.

What food is used with a gastrostomy tube, and how is feeding accomplished?

A special liquid food mixture (listed below) is administered by syringe through the tube three to five times per day. This food is formulated to meet the dog's nutritional needs and should not cause vomiting or diarrhea. To feed your dog, follow these steps:

1. Place one can of premium quality puppy or development and growth food + 10 oz (300 cc) of water in a blender and run it at the fastest (liquefy) speed until the food is uniformly mixed. After mixing, pour the food through a kitchen strainer. Some pets may require another diet. Your veterinarian recommends feeding:_____

2. Remove the cap from the feeding tube.

3. Using the feeding syringe provided, inject _____ cc of the food into your dog's feeding tube _____ times per day for a total of _____ cc per 24 hours. It is helpful to inject the food slowly, about 1 cc per second, and to elevate your dog's front feet slightly so the food goes easily into the stomach.

4. When the food has been injected, flush 10 cc of water through the tube to remove any remaining food. Replace the cap on the tube.

5. Any remaining food should be stored in the refrigerator. Before the next feeding, it should be warmed to body temperature under hot tap water or in a microwave oven. If you heat it in a microwave oven, be sure to thoroughly mix the contents prior to feeding because of uneven heating. Also, always check the temperature prior to feeding to be sure that it is not too hot.

When is the tube removed?

This decision is based on the condition being treated. You will be instructed when to return, but removal of the tube is simple and does not require anesthesia. However, you should not attempt to remove it yourself.

Note: Some measuring devices are measured in milliliters (ml) and others in cubic centimeters (cc). One ml equals one cc.

This client information sheet is based on material written by Ernest Ward, DVM.