

Let's Talk About...



Aspiration:

G-tube Considerations

Although it is not commonly recognized, it IS possible for someone who does not eat/drink anything by mouth to aspirate! This is because stomach contents that come up into the airway (called *reflux*) can be inhaled into the lungs. The good news is, there are things you can do to prevent this from happening.

- ❖ **Elevate** the head of the bed during feedings, medications, and as much as possible during other activities like resting, recreation, or during personal care like bed baths, dressing or incontinence care.
- ❖ Pay attention to how much stomach content comes up into the syringe before you administer feeding, fluid or medication. This is called **residual**. Report residual over 60mL to your nurse or supervisor before administering anything, unless otherwise specified by your employer's policy.
- ❖ Give all **medications** on time and give every dose, unless otherwise directed by your supervisor or nurse. Remember that GERD and constipation can increase the risk of aspiration!

Why would someone have a g-tube?

Dysphagia (trouble eating, swallowing, or drinking normally)

Unable to take in enough calories or fluids to stay healthy

Why is it important to check stomach residual?

If someone has too much in their stomach already, adding more can cause pressure that results in back-up into the airway.

Indiana Bureau of Disabilities Services information at <https://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/developmental-disability-services/>