

Cheat Sheet for Placing a Baby NG Tube

This cheat sheet is not meant to train you on how to insert a baby NG tube and it certainly does not replace medical advice. This is meant only as an additional aid for parents who have already had training on how to insert an NG feeding tube. Please consult your baby's medical care team about any questions or concerns you have regarding your baby's NG feeding tube and the replacement procedure.

I want you to have the courage to do this even when you are scared. It is my hope that this quick reference will help you feel a little more confident about what to do when replacing your baby's NG tube. If you need more detailed information, please refer back to my blog post entitled "When you have to Place a Baby Feeding Tube, Part II: How to Insert a Baby NG Tube".

Mama, you can do this!

Gather Your Supplies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adhesive removers (2-3)• Pre-cut pieces of tape (2 for the face, 1 for the back)• Half-wet washcloth• New NG tube (out of its package and with one port closed)• Vaseline• 5 ml Syringe (screw to the end of the NG tube)• PH Strips• Permanent marker• Bath towel or large blanket

How to Place a Baby NG Tube

1) Remove the old tape.

Start with the back tape. Then swaddle your baby to remove the face tape with adhesive removers.

2) Undress your baby from the waste up.

3) Measure the tube.

Using the non-port end of the tube, measure from nostril to earlobe and then down to the belly button. Place two fingers right above the belly button. Mark the tube with a Sharpie just above your two fingers.

It's a good idea to measure at least twice to ensure accuracy. Also reference the old tube measurement but remember that the length will change as your baby grows.

4) Dip the tube in Vaseline for lubrication.

5) Swaddle your baby.

6) Position your baby.

Put your hand under your baby to support her in a reclined position. Place your hand under her neck for support and tip her head back slightly.

7) Insert the tube.

With your free hand, pick up the Vaseline-dipped end of the new NG tube and guide it into the nostril from which you measured the tube. Push it in gently and continue feeding it in until you see the Sharpie mark just outside her nostril.

If the tube seems to get stuck, it is likely meeting with resistance due to your baby's crying. Blow in her face to get her to stop crying and swallow. Continue pushing the tube in. You may need to blow in her face repeatedly to get it all the way in. Never force the tube when it meets resistance. Pull out slightly and back in if necessary.

Even if you have to stop for a moment, do not pull the tube out. Just blow in your baby's face and keep going as quickly as you can.

If you cannot get past the nasal passage, try the other nostril. Sometimes one nasal passage is smaller than the other.

8) Check tube placement

Pull back on the syringe to check for gastric contents. Use the PH strips to make sure the PH is 5 or below if baby has been fasting for a few hours. If baby has recently eaten, you will see white milk or the color of whatever solids baby has recently eaten. The PH strips may not be an effective method of verifying placement if baby has recently eaten.

Check with your baby's medical team if you are unable to verify NG tube placement. Do not put anything through the tube until you are certain it is in the stomach.

9) Tape the tube.

Use the two pieces of face tape to tape the tube from just outside the nose all the way back to the ear to keep it secure.

10) Comfort your baby.

11) Put the back tape on.

Be sure to leave enough slack that the tube is not pulling on baby's face when she turns her head.

And now, you are done!

Congratulations, Mama! You just replaced your baby's NG tube.

Mama, you are amazing!

And that is not conditional upon successfully placing a baby NG tube by the way. You are amazing for so many other things. So whether or not you place your baby's tube successfully, I know that you are working tirelessly to do the hard things and make the tough choices to accomplish what is best for your baby. And it is that fact that makes you one amazing mama.