

What should I do if my gastrostomy tube falls out?

If your Gastrostomy tube falls out, the hole where it enters your stomach (called the "stoma tract") will close very quickly. Placing an emergency 'stoma stopper' in the hole straight away will keep it open until a new tube can be inserted.

Enplug™ stoma stoppers:

- A stoma stopper is a device made of white silicone.
- There are 4 different sized stoma stoppers in a pack.
- The size is also printed on the top of the disk head.
- The size relates to the width of the stem and is shown as "Fr" ("French Gauge").
- Enplug™ stoma stoppers are for emergency use.
- They are delivered by your nutritional home care delivery company.
- Always make sure you know where your stoma stoppers are kept.
- If you are unable to find your Enplug™ stoma stopper in an emergency, go straight to step 2 overleaf.
- If you need a new pack of Enplug™ stoma stoppers, please contact your nutritional home care delivery company or your Dietitian in the usual way.

If your gastrostomy tube falls out, follow the instructions overleaf.

1. Insert the Enplug™

- **As soon as possible**, you or your carer should insert the Enplug™ stoma stopper into the stoma tract (hole) according to the following instructions:
 - Clean and dry the area surrounding the stoma in your usual way.
If there is any bleeding or injury visible, do not place the stoma stopper, and contact your Home Care Company Nurse or District Nurse immediately.
 - Start with the stopper that is the **same size, or slightly smaller**, than the size of your feeding tube, for example:
16Fr feeding tube- start with the 16Fr Enplug™ stoma stopper
15Fr feeding tube- start with the 14Fr Enplug™ stoma stopper
 - Wet the stem of the Enplug™ stoma stopper with tap water, or coat with water-soluble lubricant, if available.
 - Insert the stem of the Enplug™ stoma stopper slowly and gently into the stoma tract. The stopper is fully inserted when the head disk is flush against the skin.
 - If the stopper doesn't go in easily, **attempt to place the next smallest size**, and continue going downwards in size until you have successfully placed a stopper.
 - If placement is difficult, painful or there is bleeding, stop and contact your Home Care Company Nurse or District Nurse. If they are unavailable, go to the Accident and Emergency department immediately.
 - Secure the Enplug™ stopper with a plaster or dressing.

2. Telephone the person who normally replaces your tube (e.g. Home Care Company Nurse, Hospital Nutrition Nurse or District Nurse) and ask them to arrange for you to be seen for your gastrostomy tube to be replaced.**3. If the Home Care Company Nurse or District Nurse is unavailable, and you need your tube for urgent fluids or medication, go to the Accident and Emergency department for a tube replacement as soon as possible. Take your spare feeding tube with you, if you have one.**

For more information: We have produced a video showing what to do and how to place a stoma stopper, which can be found at: <https://vimeo.com/338840745>

Alternatively, scan the QR code using the camera on a smartphone or tablet, to go to our website and follow the link in the “Tube Feeding” section.

