

Further information

For further information please ask to speak to a member of our senior nursing team on the Gastroenterology Unit.

RUH

The use of hand mittens

Information for patients and / or their next of kin

Introduction

This information is to help explain why hand mittens are sometimes used in the Gastroenterology Unit.



The use of mittens

Mittens are only considered when someone is unable to keep an NG tube and / or cannula in place to supply essential food, hydration and/or medications. This may be because they are restless or confused; the person may not be aware that they need these tubes or that they are pulling them out. A naso-gastric feeding tube can be easy to dislodge when a patient's condition causes them to become agitated or restless.

The nursing staff will try other methods to try and keep these tubes in place, but sometimes we have to use hand mittens for a short period of time to ensure that patients receive the treatment they need. Sometimes patients require both mittens and a special tie in the back of the nose to secure the naso-gastric tube in place.

Mittens are only used on rare occasions. The need for mittens is reviewed daily; the hands of the person are checked by each nursing shift. There are guidelines for staff to follow to ensure that they are used appropriately. It can be distressing for patients' to have tubes replaced repeatedly; using mittens can reduce the need for this.

Sometimes the team caring for you or your relative will have to make a clinical decision to use the mittens in the best interests of the patient. Where possible, we will always involve the patient in that decision, but sometimes they are not able to give their consent. In this scenario ideally the next of kin will have been shown the mittens before they are used, but on occasion we may have to put them on before a visit or discussion in order to ensure the patient receives urgent treatment needed to aid their recovery.

When mittens are used, they are removed regularly to check the skin and to provide hand hygiene. This will be performed on each shift. The need for the mittens will also be regularly reviewed.

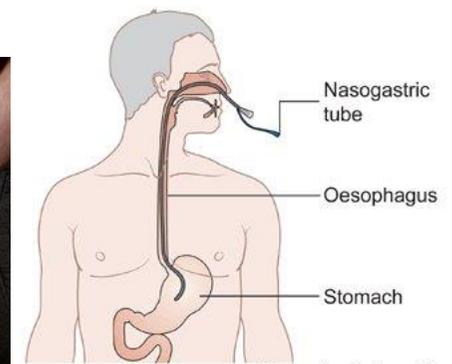
If you have any concerns about mittens or would like to discuss mittens further, then please speak to the nurse in charge of the ward.

NG tube and intravenous treatment

An NG tube (naso-gastric tube) can be used for feeding and / or to deliver fluids and medications. An intravenous cannula 'drip' can be placed to provide fluid, medications and rarely nutrition. Sometimes patients need both a cannula and NG tube depending on the nature of their treatment, and whether they have a weak swallow, such as after a stroke.



Intravenous cannula 'drip'



Naso-gastric (NG) tube