

Bolster Dressing for G-tubes and J-tubes

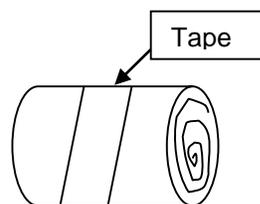
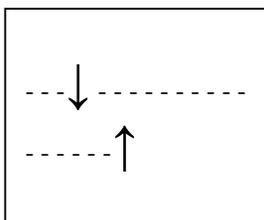
This teaching sheet is to be used with the book **Caring for a Child with a G-tube**. (See page 13 in the book.) If you did not get a care notebook, please ask your child's nurse.

What is a bolster dressing?

- This dressing helps to keep your child's tube in place.
- It is used with some new tubes.
 - It is also used when a long indwelling tube without a stabilization bar or disc is in place.
- It is used to help heal certain skin problems around a tube.
- The dressing holds the tube securely in place and helps with healing.
- This dressing will need to be changed only when the bolster becomes dirty or is not secure.
 - It does not need to be changed every day – although the site is to be cleaned daily.
 - The bolster should be changed if it has not been changed in 3 days.

What are the steps for making a bolster dressing?

- Get your supplies.
 - Soap and water
 - Washcloth or Q-tips®
 - 3 x 3 gauze (2 pieces)
 - ½" X 4" tape strips (4 pieces)
 - 1" tape for tension loop
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Take 2 pieces of 3 x 3 gauze and fold in thirds to make the bolster.
- Roll it tightly and tape it so it won't unroll. You can make several of them up ahead to save time. Put them in a plastic baggie.



How is a bolster dressing changed?

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Get a bolster dressing and tape.
- Take off the old bolster dressing.
- Clean the skin site with soap and water using a washcloth or Q-tips®.
 - Your child's daily bath is a good time to do this care.
- If the skin site around the tube has dried or crusty build-up, soak it with a warm wet washcloth to help get it off.
- Rinse skin with water and dry the area well.
- Check the placement of the tube. This needs to be done only after the stitches are removed.
 - Gently push the tube into the stomach.
 - Twist the tube in the tract.
 - Gently pull back on the tube until the mushroom or water balloon is snug against the stomach wall.
- Move the bolster to a different area on the skin each time you change the dressing.
 - This keeps the hole from becoming larger.
 - It also limits irritation from tape on the skin.
 - Change the bolster when it is dirty or if the tube is unstable. Move the bolster if it has been in the same spot for 3 days.
- Put the bolster on the skin next to the tube.
 - Make sure you are holding the tube straight up.
 - Pull up the tube gently so the balloon or mushroom is pulled snug against your child's stomach wall.
 - Have the tube lay over the bolster and begin to put tape on.
- Put the ½" x 4" pieces of tape over the tube and bolster dressing using two or three strips of tape side by side.
 - The tape should not overlap or criss-cross.
- Put one extra strip about 1 – 2 inches away from the bolster.
 - Fold the tape around the tube until it meets.
 - Put the ends of the tape onto the skin.
 - This strip adds security to the tube and dressing. This way, if the tube is accidentally pulled on, it is more protected.
- A belly band or a one-piece suite with snaps can help secure the tube and bolster even more.



Note: see stabilization techniques on pages 15-16 of the book *Caring for a Child with a G-tube*.

Tips

- It may be easiest to plan the dressing change during your child's bath time.
- If the bolster dressing does not need to be changed just clean the skin around the tube with soap and water daily.
- To remove the old dressing, you may use adhesive tape remover. Be sure it is rinsed off and the area is dried well before replacing the dressing.
- It is best to move the bolster and tape with each dressing change. This prevents the tube from leaning on one side and making the hole larger. This also protects the skin around the tube.
- The tube should exit the skin and lay over the bolster dressing. The tube should stay straight up from the tract.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.