

The Nasal Bridle System

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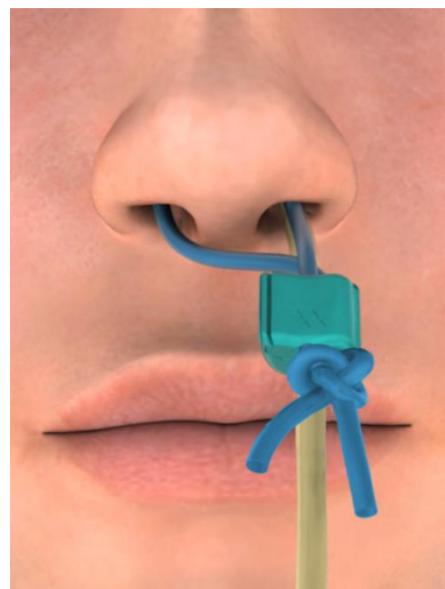
Introduction

A Nasal Bridle (also known as a nasal loop) is used to prevent a nasogastric tube from being pulled out. Nasogastric tubes are long thin soft plastic tubes inserted into the stomach via the nostril. They allow food and medication to be given to a patient who cannot swallow properly. The nasal bridle consists of a length of cotton tape or silicone that wraps around the back of the nasal bone (the vomer bone) and then clips onto the feeding tube to stabilize it so it cannot be accidentally removed.

Technique

The nasal bridle is simple to insert and usually takes only 2 or 3 minutes. There is some discomfort during this time but this is similar to having a nasogastric tube inserted. The nasogastric tube is usually inserted first but this is not always the case.

- The nasal bridle is inserted using a probe with a medical magnet mounted on one end. The probe is inserted into one nostril.
- A soft plastic tube which also has a magnet on one end is inserted into the other nostril.
- This tube has the cotton tape/silicone attached to it and a removable stiffening wire inside.
- The probe and tube are gently manipulated until the magnets attach behind the nasal septum. The stiffening wire is then removed.
- The probe is withdrawn and the soft plastic tube is pulled around the back of the nasal septum drawing the cotton tape/silicone with it.
- Once the tape/silicone is positioned so it is hanging out of both nostrils it is fitted into a special clip alongside the nasogastric tube and the ends of the tape are tied.
- To remove the bridle the cotton tape/silicone is simply cut above the tie and pulled out. This only takes a few seconds.



Safety and situations in which the technique is not appropriate

The technique is safe and the only common problem is that it may provoke a small nosebleed.

It **cannot** be performed if:

- The nose is very distorted (for example in some patients who have suffered a broken nose in the past),
- If the patient's blood does not clot normally,
- If the patient has a particular type of skull fracture.

Care of the nasal bridle

The bridle tape/silicon should be gently cleaned and dried at least daily. This may be required to be done more frequently, especially if there are excessive secretions from the nose. The nose should be checked daily to ensure that the bridle is not causing any irritation or bleeding.

Please note

The bridle can never completely guarantee that nasogastric tubes cannot be displaced. It is possible to pick open the clip or untie the tape/silicon (although this is very unusual). It has also been found possible on occasion to pull the feeding tube from out of the clip leaving the bridle in place

Further information

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