

Burden of feeding tubes



Sometimes, a feeding tube is necessary

While originally intended as a short-term replacement for oral intake to patients who cannot or refuse to obtain nutrition by swallowing, feeding tubes have become a long-term condition for many patients with dysphagia. However, treatment options such as VitalStim Therapy offer an effective tool for clinicians to help avoid the pain, expense, inconvenience and life-altering burden of a feeding tube for many patients.

PEG-tube Use Complications/Considerations

Up to 70 percent of patients reported PEG-related complications.¹ And, in the 30 days following PEG placement, mortality results in 22 percent of patients, with fewer than half of patients surviving for a year or more. Adding to the burden already imposed by tube-feeding, very few PEG-tube patients ever return to living in their own homes.

Financial Considerations

- Peg-tube feeding and labor costs and average of \$90 per day.
- One year of PEG-tube feeding costs an estimated \$31,000.
- Insurance reimbursement is not always available.
- In 2003, the annual cost to Medicare for enteral feeding supplies topped \$670 million, or 6 percent of the total Medicare budget for DME supplies for that year.²

COMPLICATIONS OF PEG TUBES

