

**TITLE:** RANDOMIZED PROSPECTIVE COMPARISON OF FEEDING TUBE PLACEMENT, STOMACH VERSUS SMALL INTESTINE, FOR ENTERAL FEEDING IN THE MEDICAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

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**LEARNING OUTCOME:** To compare the tolerance of enteral feedings in the stomach versus the small intestine and also to determine if trained nurses can successfully place feeding tubes.

**TEXT:** The purpose of this study was to evaluate if it is better to enterally feed into the stomach or the small intestine, and also to see if trained nurses could successfully place feeding tubes using a stylet for guidance. Approximately 60 patients requiring enteral feeding in the MICU at the Medical University of South Carolina were placed into either a well group or unwell group. The well group consisted of patients that were intubated, on mechanical ventilation, and also hemodynamically stable. The unwell group included patients that did not meet the criteria of the well group. Within these groups, the patients were randomized into two smaller groups. One group received a gastric tube and the other group a small bowel tube. All tubes were placed using a stylet by a trained nurse, and feedings were administered based on standard protocol. The study revealed that in the unwell group, enteral feedings were better tolerated in the small bowel. In the well group, there was no significant difference in gastric feedings and small bowel feedings. The feeding tubes were successfully placed into the stomach or the small bowel by trained nurses in 53 of the 60 patients (88%). This study shows that in sicker populations, tolerance of enteral nutrition may be improved by placing the feeding tube postpylorically.

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