ICU GUIDELINE: ROUTES OF NUTRITION SUPPORT

START

Able to meet needs via the oral route?

No

Contraindication to use of gut? (see BLUE BOX - A)

Yes

Consider TPN (Individual assessment re appropriateness required)

No

Enteral Nutrition

Oral diet

Contraindication to gastric feeding (see PINK BOX - B)

No

NG tube

Yes

ND tube

Pending abdominal surgery?

No

Short term: ND tube. Place using a manual technique (see above). Place endoscopically or fluoroscopically if manual placement failed or contraindicated.

Long term: Gastro-jejunostomy tube. Place tube endoscopically or fluoroscopically.

Yes

Short term EN: ND tube. Place using an intra-operative placement technique.

Long term EN: Gastro-jejunostomy or jejunostomy tube. Place tube intra-operatively.

Refer to resource entitled "ICU Guideline: Manual ND Feeding Tube Placement" for direction how to place ND tube.

BOX - A: Contraindications to use of gut:

Absolute:
- Mechanical bowel obstruction
- Bowel ischemia

Relative:
- Hemodynamic instability
- Small bowel ileus
- Bowel anastomosis

BOX - B: Contraindication to gastric feeding:

1) Gastric residual volumes > threshold maximum (250 ml) despite prokinetic(s).
2) Chronic/acute gastroesophageal reflux.
3) High risk pulmonary aspiration (e.g. nursed in the supine or prone position).

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