

## E-210 Inserting Rectal Tube

### Purpose

Relieve the discomfort of distention and flatus caused by decreased motility. Contraindicated in recent rectal or prostatic surgery clients, and clients with recent myocardial infarction.

### Applies To

Registered Nurses

Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses

Other (*Identify*): \_\_\_\_\_

### Equipment/Supplies

- Chux
- Stethoscope
- Water soluble lubricant
- #22-32 French catheter (rectal tube) of soft rubber or plastic
- Container such as a plastic bag, specimen cup or bottle with vent
- Tape
- Gloves

### Procedure

1. Gather equipment.
2. Wash hands. Refer to Hand Washing Procedure.
3. Explain procedure to client.
4. Check for abdominal distension and with stethoscope. Listen for bowel sounds.
5. Place chux or other pad under client buttocks.
6. Position the client on left side.
7. Put on gloves.
8. Lubricate the tube with water soluble lubricant to ease insertion.
9. Insert the rectal tube tip into the rectum and advance 2-4 inches. Direct the tube towards the umbilicus.
10. Encourage client to breathe slowly and deeply or that he/she bear down to relax the anal sphincter.
11. Tape the tube to the buttocks.

12. Attach the tube to the container to collect any drainage.
13. Remove tube after 15-20 minutes.  
Procedure may be repeated in 2-3 hours as needed.
14. Re-check for abdominal distension.

**Documentation Guidelines**

Document in the clinical record:

1. Date and time of procedure.
2. Amount, color and consistency of any drainage.
3. Physical signs and symptoms including appearance and presence of bowel sounds.

**Related Procedures**

None.

**Policy History**

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