

Procedure Box 9-3 Administration of Medications by Nasogastric or Gastric Tube—cont'd

- Place more critical medications into the tubing first so it is less likely that a crucial medication will be vomited out of the tube.
- After medication has been administered, flush the tubing with NSS.
- Clamp the tube with your fingers by pinching it.
- While the tube is closed, remove the syringe and reattach the securing device.
- Assess the patient.
- Wash hands.
- Document medication administration and the patient's response.

Example:

12/01/2012 12:25 p.m.: 15 mg Reglan liquid administered via NG. Tube placement checked x2. Patient tolerated well. CJ Watkins RN, MSN

Fast Tip 9.2 Checking Tube Placement

You can check that the nasogastric (NG) tube is in the stomach either by injecting air into the tube while listening with a stethoscope for the sound of air in the stomach or by drawing back on a syringe attached to the tube and checking whether stomach contents flow backward into the syringe.

The Buccal Route of Medication Administration

The **buccal** pouch, or cheek, is a good route for applying medication in the mouth or throat to ease local inflammation. Troches (lozenges) can be held in the cheek. They are usually pleasant tasting and melt slowly over time, coating the throat and mouth. For patients with a sore throat, this route is ideal. It is important to tell the patient not to swallow or bite the buccal medication because it will not work as planned. In addition, liquid medication may be used to coat the interior of the mouth and cheeks. The patient is instructed to swish the medication around and then spit it out. One example is nystatin, used for fungal infections. Another example is a lidocaine solution, which is used in patients who are receiving chemotherapy and have resulting lesions in the mouth. The patient may need to refrain from drinking for 15 to 20 minutes after taking the buccal medication, to maximize the effect and prevent the medication from being washed away.

The Sublingual Route of Medication Administration

Sublingual means under the tongue. The many capillaries under the tongue provide a rich blood supply for quick absorption of a medication. For that reason, nitroglycerin, which improves heart function, is placed sublingually for immediate relief of chest pain or during a heart attack. Although slower than an injection into a vein, the sublingual route delivers medication quickly without having to pass completely through the digestive system.

Rectal Medications and Administration

Some medications, such as suppositories, enemas, suspensions, or ointments, must be administered rectally. This route is sometimes necessary because the patient has severe nausea or vomiting or is not alert enough to swallow. Some may ask why the medication cannot be given by the intravenous (IV) route. The reason is that some medications do not come in parenteral forms (e.g., Tylenol), or the patient may not have IV access. Many medications, such as Tylenol (fever, pain) and Phenergan (nausea and vomiting), are available as suppositories. They have a glycerin or cocoa butter base containing the