

# Poison Identification { Through Gastric Lavage

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# Poison

{ A Poison is a substance which, when administered, inhaled or ingested, is capable of acting deleteriously on the human body.

- ⌘ Anything is a Poison.
- ⌘ No Real Boundary between Medicine and Poison.
- ⌘ Medicine in toxic doses acts as a poison.
- ⌘ Poison in small/therapeutic doses acts as a medicine.
- ⌘ In Law the difference is the **INTENT**.
- ⌘ If the substance is given with the intention to save life, it is a medicine but if it is given with the intention to cause bodily harm/endanger ones life , it is Poison.

Gastric lavage also commonly known as **Stomach wash** or **Gastric suction**, is the process of cleaning out the contents of the stomach. It has been used for eliminating poisons from the stomach.

# Gastric Lavage

If not contraindicated, may be life saving if undertaken within about four to six hours after ingestion of poison.

## Indications of Gastric Lavage

- 1) Corrosive poisoning(except carbolic acid)for fear of rupture of the stomach
- 2) Strychnine poisoning and convulsions(performed if necessary precautions are taken and convulsions are controlled)
- 3) Kerosene or volatile poisons
- 4) Comatose conditions(airway should be sealed by cuffed intubation to avoid risk of aspiration into air passages)
- 5) Hypothermia(paying attention to body temperature)

## Contraindications of Gastric Lavage



➤ *Position;*

Patient should be prone or semi prone on his side(left lateral position)with hips higher than his head as this will help in respiratory drainage and also prevent regurgitated material from entering the respiratory tract

# Procedure of Gastric Lavage

- *Dentures, if any must be removed*
- *Airway must be clear*
- *A mouth gag with a central hole, especially in unconscious patients, to prevent rubber tube from being bitten off by the teeth.*



## ➤ *Gastric Lavage Tube*

**Adults** ----Stomach tube;

Flexible rubber tube

12.7 mm external diameter

1.5 meter in length

Marked at a point,50 centimeters from lower end

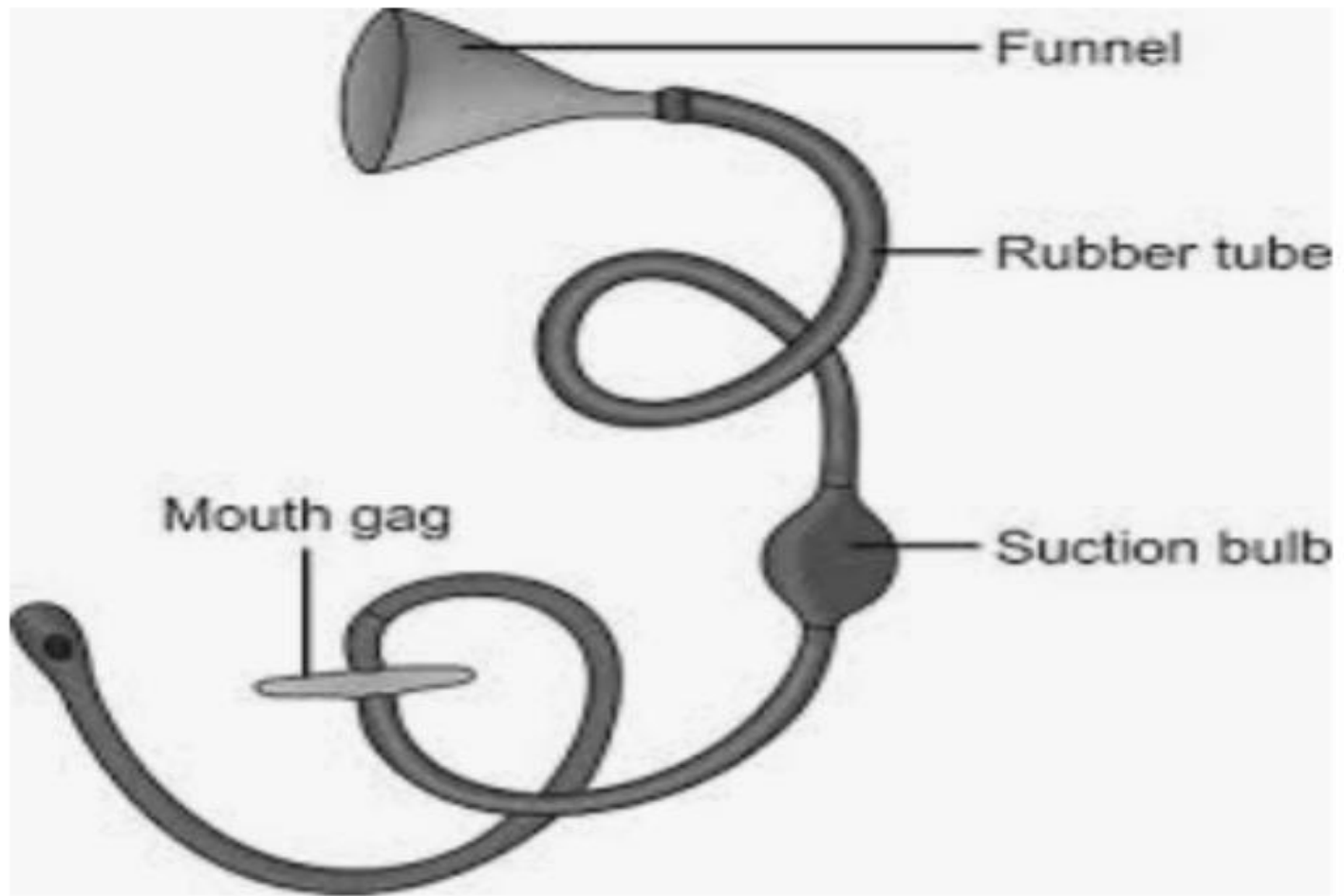
Distance b/w lips and cardiac end of stomach is about  
45 centimeters

**Children** ----Ryle's tube/number 8 to 12 French rubber catheter

25 centimeters length necessary to reach stomach

Passed through nose or mouth into stomach

Stomach wash done using a 50 ml glass syringe.



*Parts of Gastric Lavage Tube*

- The lower end of the tube should be lubricated with liquid paraffin, glycerine, milk, or some other substance, and passed through the hole in the middle of mouth gag, over tongue, depressing it if necessary and down the esophagus.
- At about the mark, the tip of the tube should be lying in the stomach in the adult.

*Use of Stomach Tube*

- After testing, about a quarter a litre of plain warm water (35 degrees Celsius) is run into the funnel, which is held above the level of patient's mouth
- The fluid enters the stomach by gravity
- The funnel is then lowered, below the level of the patient's stomach, over a receptacle, to allow the gastric contents to siphon off
- Subsequent washings are done with half liter of fluid
- Using too much fluid for the first wash is likely to sweep the poisons onwards into the duodenum.
- The process is repeated with warm water or other fluid containing appropriate antidote until the returning fluid is of the same color and character as lavage fluid
- Before stomach tube is withdrawn, it should be pinched to prevent aspiration of material into lungs.



- The first washing, which is usually done with warm water, should be preserved for chemical analysis

## Sampling Technique of Gastric Lavage Fluid



The End.