

POSTOPERATIVE OUTCOME

The systems implicated in the cause of death are presented in Table 37.

Table 37. Systems implicated in death following PEG procedures (answers may be multiple)	
Systems implicated in death	Total <i>n</i> = 670
Cardiovascular	173
Respiratory	508
Renal	37
Hepatic	9
CNS	35
Total	762
Not answered	49

76% (508/670) of patients suffered from respiratory complications after their PEG procedure. It is known that over the long-term, aspiration pneumonia is the most common cause of death for gastrostomy tube-fed patients⁵. However, that patients should die of respiratory complications so early after PEG placement is of concern. Possible reasons for this are patient selection and the timing of the procedure. During the procedure, the supine position of the patient with swallowing problems, perhaps particularly when combined with topical LA and sedation is used, may contribute to aspiration complications. Postoperatively, the position of the patient during and after feeds and the timing and volumes of feed may be contributory factors.