

## **Gastrostomy: Nurses Failed To Confirm Location Before Feeding The Patient.**

**T**he patient was only eighteen years of age when he sustained a major head injury in a motor vehicle accident which left him in a persistent vegetative state.

A gastrostomy tube was placed in his abdomen for feeding and administration of medications while he was still a patient in the university teaching hospital where he was taken after his accident.

After the tube was removed and repositioned the placement of the tube in the stomach was not confirmed by the physician who repositioned the tube or by the nurses caring for the patient before the nurses fed him nutrition through the tube.

Nutrition getting into the abdomen outside of the stomach resulted in systemic infection which required extensive abdominal surgeries and extra time in the hospital before the patient was transferred to long term care.

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***Verifying correct placement of a gastrostomy tube is a responsibility that falls on the physician as well as the nurses caring for the patient, according to the expert testimony in this case.***

SUPERIOR COURT  
SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA  
February 26, 2010

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The jury in the Superior Court, Sacramento County, California returned a verdict of \$456,745 for the patient.

The expert testimony in the trial reportedly convinced the jury that the nurses' as well as the physician's actions fell below the standard of care. The experts also convinced the jury that the patient, although unable to communicate to his caregivers, was nonetheless capable of experiencing pain in his condition due to his caregivers' negligence. **Garcia v. Univ. of California**, 2010 WL 4462084 (Sup. Ct. Sacramento Co., California, February 26, 2010).