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# Symposium 2014 - Sunday Workshop Sessions

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## *Animal Nursing Practical Workshop led by Dr Liz Mullineaux and Jenna Richardson (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Medicine):*

### Gavaging (crop-tubing) method:

1. Weigh the bird and calculate the amount of fluid required. A suitable volume for most casualties (maintenance plus 10%) would be 150ml/kg/24hrs
2. Divide the amount calculated into at least four feeds over 24 hours (e.g. for a 100g bird 15ml divided by 4 = 3.75ml).
3. Draw up the required amount of warm fluid (e.g. Lactade) or food (e.g. KT extract) in a syringe. Fluid or food should ideally be at body temperature.
4. Choose a tube of an appropriate diameter for the bird to be tubed. Choose the correct length of tube by measuring the tube on the outside of the bird's neck, from the beak to the top of the keel. Attach the tube to a syringe that will take the volume of fluid calculated.
5. Draw the fluid up the tube to remove any air and until the correct amount shows in the syringe.
6. If available ask your assistant to hold the bird with its head facing you. One person can hold the bird while a second person carries out the procedure.
7. Experienced personnel may be able to carry out gavage single-handed, particularly for smaller birds. With large, aggressive birds, particularly piscivorous (fish eating) birds, goggles should be worn to protect the eyes and keep the beak open to prevent it biting through the tube.
8. Hold the bird's head and gently open its beak, keeping the beak open



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- with your finger and thumb and controlling the head at the same time.
9. Restrain the bird's body and head, holding the bird in a vertical position with the neck extended.
  10. Palpate the crop to ensure that it is empty before giving liquids or food by gavage.
  11. Feed the tube into the mouth and down one side of the beak and tongue to avoid the glottis and trachea at the base of the tongue. The feeding tube must NOT be placed into the glottis.
  12. Continue to feed the tube gently down the oesophagus into the crop. Confirm the tube is in the oesophagus/crop by visual inspection and/or gentle palpation of the neck, you should be able to feel the tube.
  13. Slowly depress the syringe to release fluid, watching all the time for fluid coming back up into the throat. Stop immediately if this occurs and continue at slower rate.
  14. If the bird regurgitates it should be released immediately to allow it to clear its oral cavity.
  15. Once all the fluid has been administered, quickly remove the tube to avoid any leaking into the mouth. The bird should be allowed to shake its head and neck if food is being regurgitated.
  16. Keep the bird's head extended while returning it to its accommodation.
  17. Avoid disturbing the bird for at least 20-30 minutes to reduce the risk of regurgitation.
  18. Tubes and syringes should be cleaned and placed for sterilisation (e.g. i Milton for 30 minutes) if a tube is to be reused. Tubes must only be used for more than one bird if appropriately sterilised as there is a real risk of disease transmission. Tubes used for birds of known disease risk (e.g. canker) must be thrown away.

***Dr Elizabeth Mullineaux, 2014***

