

Tracheostomy Overview

A small opening, stoma, has been made in your child's windpipe to help make breathing easier. Inside the stoma sits a breathing tube, called a tracheostomy tube. Your child now breathes in and out through this **tracheostomy tube** ("trach") rather than through their nose and mouth.

What do I need to learn to care for my child's tracheostomy?

You will be taught how to care for your child's tracheostomy

Classes: Tracheostomy 101, Tracheostomy Emergency Airway Management 1 and 2 (TEAM), Educational Walk, CPR, and Equipment training through DME

Care of the tracheostomy at home involves:

- Suctioning the tracheostomy tube
- Keeping the area around the tracheostomy clean to prevent skin irritation and infection
- Changing the tracheostomy tube
- Providing moisture (the air they are breathing is no longer filtered, warmed, and moistened by passing through the nose and mouth. The air needs to have moisture added. This also helps to keep the mucous thin so it can be removed from the tracheostomy tube by suctioning or coughing)
- Maintaining a safe and clean environment

What supplies will be needed at home to care for my child's tracheostomy?

***Some supplies are provided through a Durable Medical Equipment (DME) company**

- Suction machine and suction catheters (size _____)
- Tracheostomy tubes (size _____) and one size smaller (size _____)
- Ties to hold the tube in place
- Air compressor with humidifier or other oxygen device to provide mist to keep the breathing passage moist. If a ventilator is needed to assist breathing, humidity will be provided through the ventilator
- Tracheostomy mask (collar or direct connection) and tubing to connect mask to mist and tubing
- Tracheostomy cleaning kits
- Tracheostomy dressing (2x2 split gauze or other recommended dressing to go between tracheostomy tube and skin under it)
- Ventilator, if mechanical ventilation needed
- Apnea monitor
- oxygen saturation monitor
- Heat and Moisture Exchanger (HME)
- Gloves
- Resuscitation bag and resuscitation mask
- Emergency Tracheostomy Bag (includes supplies for emergent tracheostomy tube change)
- Stroller, wagon, or wheelchair for holding equipment and supplies

The following supplies will need to be purchased by parent or caregiver

- Containers to store spare tracheostomy tubes
- Hand sanitizer
- Distilled water
- Pipe cleaners
- Cotton swabs
- Water-soluble lubricant (K-Y® Jelly or Surgilube®)
- Unscented and dye free soap (to clean tracheostomy site and tracheostomy tubes)

Supplies to take when traveling away from home or to school:

- Portable suction machine, fully charged
- Oxygenation Saturation Monitor
- Ventilator, if mechanical ventilation needed
- Emergency Tracheostomy Bag

Safety precautions:

- Avoid Smoke, aerosol sprays, powders, heavy dust and cleaning products with strong fumes (such as bleach and ammonia), are irritating when breathed through a tracheostomy
- Avoid using fuzzy blankets, toys or clothing with loose fibers that could be “breathed” into your child’s tracheostomy
- Dress your child in clothing that does not cover the tracheostomy
- Supervise bathing. Do not let water get into your child’s tracheostomy. **Never leave a baby or child alone in a tub**
- Do not allow your child to play alone with toys that have small parts that could be removed and put into his/her tracheostomy
- Keep extra tracheostomy tubes with your child at all times (current size and one size smaller)

Call your child’s doctor:

- If Your child has a fever over 100° F (37.8° C) taken under the arm
- If mucus suctioned from the tracheostomy changes color (yellow, green, tan or brown) or smells bad
- If food or blood is suctioned from your child’s tracheostomy tube
- If you are unable to replace the current size tracheostomy tube

Call your emergency number (911) if your child has difficulty breathing that does not improve with suctioning or changing the tracheostomy tube.