

## **Infant & Child Tracheostomy Care at Home**

**By the time my child goes home, I will be able to show or tell the staff how I will:**

1. Know the type and size of tracheostomy my child has.
2. Care for and clean the tracheostomy stoma.
3. Suction the tracheostomy tube.
4. Change the tracheostomy tube.
5. Keep my child safe with a tracheostomy.
6. Know the signs that my child is ill.
7. Know what to do during an emergency.
8. Know who my resources are when caring for my child.

**The staff will use three questions to teach me about my /child tracheostomy:**

1. What is my infant's main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is this important to me?

The staff will ask me to repeat back important points in my own words or ask me to show what I have learned. They want to make sure that I know about my infant/child tracheostomy care and how to take care of my child.

**What is my child's main problem?**

My child has trouble breathing and needs a tracheostomy to breathe better. I need to know how to take care of the tracheostomy tube at home.

**What do I need to do?**

**I will know the type and size of tracheostomy my child has.**

Tracheostomy type: \_\_\_\_\_

Tracheostomy size: \_\_\_\_\_ mm.

**I will be able to show the staff how I will care for and clean the tracheostomy stoma.**

## Daily Care

- Wash my hands with soap and water or clean them with alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- The skin around the tracheostomy must be clean and dry.
- Remove tracheostomy pants.
- Look at the skin for any red or irritated areas.
- Clean this area at least twice a day. I may need to clean it more often.
- Use cotton-tip applicators or lint-free gauze to clean around the stoma.
- Use sterile water.
- Use a rolling motion, starting at the stoma and working outward. This will keep me from pushing dried secretions or soap into the tracheostomy.
- Rinse with water and then gently dry the area.
- Put on new tracheostomy pants.

## Changing tracheostomy ties

- Wash my hands with soap and water or clean them with alcohol based hand cleaner
- Change the tracheostomy tie when it is wet or soiled. **I may need to change the** tracheostomy tie every day.
- I need someone to help me. I should not do this alone.
- I will swaddle my child and have the second person help hold my child.
- Remove tracheostomy pants.
- Remove the tracheostomy tie on one side of the tracheostomy tube.
- Insert the end of new tracheostomy tie on same side that the old tie was removed. Velcro the tie in place.
- Wrap the new tracheostomy tie around the back of my child's neck to the other side of the tracheostomy tube.
- Remove the other end of the old tracheostomy tie.
- Insert the end of new tracheostomy tie and Velcro it in place.
- Put on clean tracheostomy pants.

**I will be able to show the staff how I will suction the tracheostomy.**

Keeping the airway clear.

- The tracheostomy tube should be suctioned every 4 hours and if or when I notice that my child is:
  - Breathing faster or harder
  - Looks pale, gray, or blue in color especially around the mouth.
  - Looks frightened or anxious
  - Bubbles mucus out of the tracheostomy tube
  - Makes rattling or whistling sounds
  - Will not eat or drink

Suction Technique

- To suction my child, I need to:
  - Wash my hands with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.
  - Swaddle my child or have another person help to hold my child.
  - Remove the catheter from the package. The tip of the catheter should not touch my hands or any object.
  - Turn on the suction machine and attach the catheter to the tubing.
  - Insert the catheter into the tracheostomy tube to the premeasured depth.
  - Place my thumb over the suction port.
  - Pull the catheter out using a rotating motion.
  - Limit suction time to less than 5 seconds.
  - Know the suction catheter size and depth
    - Suction catheter size \_\_\_\_\_fr
    - Suction catheter insertion depth \_\_\_\_\_cm

**I will be able to show the staff how I will change the tracheostomy tube.**

I will change the tube:

- When the tube is plugged.
- At least once every 7 days.

Changing the tracheostomy tube

- Get all of my supplies ready before I begin to change the tube.
- Wash my hands with soap and water or clean with alcohol based hand cleaner
- Have another person there to help me.

- Put the obturator into the clean tube.
- Attach a tracheostomy tie to one side of the neck plate.
- Lightly coat the tip of the new tube with water or soluble lubricant (Surgigel ®).
- Use a roll under my infant's shoulders to extend the neck.
- Keep the head straight.
- Hold the old tube in place while the trach tie is loosened.
- Remove the old tube.
- Put the clean tube in using a downward curving motion.
- Remove the obturator and secure the trach tie to the other side of the tube.
- Put on new tracheostomy pants.

#### Cleaning the tracheostomy tube

- Wash my hands with soap and water or clean with alcohol based hand cleaner
- Make a solution of half water and half hydrogen peroxide or mild soap and water.
- Place tracheostomy tube in the container of hydrogen peroxide solution or mild soap and water for about 15 minutes.
- Scrub the inside of the tracheostomy tube with a cotton tip swab and rinse with water.
- Look through the tracheostomy tube to make sure that the tube is clean.
- Place the tracheostomy tube on a clean towel and air dry.
- When the tracheostomy tube is dry, attach the tracheostomy ties. Place the tube in a plastic bag to be used later when needed.

#### **I will be able to show the staff how I will keep my child safe with a tracheostomy.**

##### Safety

- My child should not be around anyone who smokes. Smoke will make it hard to breathe.
- I will not allow any open flames within 5 feet of my child or any equipment.
- I will keep my home free from lint, dust, and pet hair.
- I will not use powders, baby powder, strong cleaning products or aerosol sprays in the same room with my child.

- I will dress my child in clothes that do not block the tracheostomy. I will avoid high necklines and clothes that shed fibers or lint such as fleece.
- I will not have toys with small parts that could fit inside the tracheostomy.
- Bath water must be shallow to avoid splashing. Water will go directly into the lungs if it gets in the tracheostomy.

**I will be able to tell the staff signs of illness in my child.**

When to call the doctor

- A fever above 101°F
- Mucus that is yellow or green or smells bad
- Breathing problems that do not improve after suctioning and changing the tracheostomy tube.
- Skin around the tracheostomy that is broken down, red, swollen or has drainage.

**I will be able to recognize the symptoms that my child is having trouble breathing.**

- When my child takes a breath, I may see the skin sink-in between his ribs or under his breastbone.
- His nostrils may flare.
- He may look grey or blue around his mouth.
- It may look like he is working hard to breathe.
- He may be irritable.
- When I use a stethoscope to listen to his breath sounds, it does not sound normal.

**I will be able to tell the staff what I will do in an emergency.**

An emergency can happen at any time. If the tracheostomy is not working my child will not be able to get enough air to breathe.

- Some common emergencies are if I cannot:
  - Clear the tube with suctioning. If this happens, it is probably plugged.
  - Replace the tracheostomy tube.
- Everyone who cares for my child must be ready to begin the emergency plan.
- I need to be trained in CPR.

- In an emergency, I will call out for help, start CPR, and call 911.
- I need to be able to use the ambu bag using either the trach or the facemask.
- I will be able to use portable and regular oxygen with humidity.
- I will know what to do in the event of a power failure.
- I will keep the following equipment with me at all times:
  - Suctioning equipment
    - suction machine
    - catheters
    - saline
  - Tube change supplies
    - extra trach tubes with obturators - same size and one size smaller
    - lubricant
    - tracheostomy ties
  - Self-inflating resuscitation bag and mask.
  - Emergency phone list for doctors and equipment vendors.
  - Working phone with me at all times.

**I will be able to tell the staff who my resources are in caring for my child.**

Resources

- Primary health care provider: \_\_\_\_\_
- Pediatric surgeon: \_\_\_\_\_
- Home durable equipment: \_\_\_\_\_
- Home health agency: \_\_\_\_\_
- Occupational therapist: \_\_\_\_\_
- Physical therapist: \_\_\_\_\_
- Speech therapist \_\_\_\_\_
- Case manager \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional Resources: \_\_\_\_\_

**Why is this important to me?**

I want my child to grow, be healthy and happy. I will be able to care for, love and enjoy my child. I will know what to do to keep tracheostomy complications from happening. I will know what to do if a complication happens. I will be able to keep my child safe.

As part of my child's care, I have received this education plan. I may also receive:

- Tracheostomy Home Care Guide Video

## Infant & Child Tracheostomy Care at Home Education Plan

### Resources for Staff

- Tracheostomy Home Care Guide

### Teaching Tools

- Infant & Child tracheostomy Care at Home Education Plan.
- Tracheostomy Home Care Guide Video (both English & Spanish editions available in the tracheostomy teaching box)
- Tracheostomy Teaching Box

### References:

Elizabeth Fiske, RNS, MSN, NNP. (2004) Effective Strategies to Prepare Infants and Families for Home Tracheostomy Care. *Advances in Neonatal Care*. 4(1). 42-53

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