

Tracheostomy Care – Suctioning

Suction your child's tracheostomy tube as needed. This keeps the tube clear of mucus that can block or plug the tracheostomy.

Use clean techniques as follows using a size _____ suction catheter.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for 15-20 seconds
2. Check the specified suction depth for your child's tracheostomy tube
3. Remove the suction catheter from the package/container. Be careful not to touch the part of the catheter that goes into the tracheostomy
4. Remove HME/Trach mask/Ventilator tubing
5. Turn on the suction machine
6. Attach the suction catheter to the suction machine tubing
7. Hold end of catheter with the opening in one hand, with other hand place your thumb and first finger at measured suction depth
8. Insert the catheter to measure suction depth
9. Place thumb over the suction opening, slowly remove the catheter in swirling motion. Be careful not to touch the part of the suction catheter that goes into the tracheostomy—Suctioning your child's tracheostomy tube should not take more than 5 seconds
10. Replace HME/Trach mask/Ventilator tubing
11. Repeat suctioning of your child's tracheostomy (steps 7-9) as needed – Allow 30 seconds for your child to catch his/her breath between suctioning
12. Turn off the suction machine
13. Note any changes in color, thickness, how much mucus or smell of the mucus
14. Rinse the catheter by putting the tip in distilled water and applying suction
15. Place the catheter in clean storage container for reuse
16. Change the suction connecting tube as needed when it becomes cloudy and doesn't clear after rinsing it with water
17. Empty and clean the collection jar on the suction machine as instructed

Safety Precautions:

- Do not insert the suction catheter further than the distance specified
- Take only 5 seconds each time you suction. Wait 30 seconds before suctioning again. Remember, your child can not breathe during suctioning and needs time to catch his/her breath afterwards
- If the suction catheter cannot be inserted to the suction depth specified, change out your child's tracheostomy tube
- Replace the suction catheter as needed when it becomes dirty

If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's tracheostomy, call your doctor at: _____

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