

Tracheostomy Stoma Care (Trach Care)

Why is it important to clean the stoma?

The tracheostomy stoma is a hole in the front of your child's neck where the trach tube is placed. Routine care of the tracheostomy stoma and neck will reduce the chance of infection. Regular tracheostomy tie changes help reduce neck irritation. This is the best time to carefully check the skin around the stoma site and neck. Look for any changes, such as redness, irritation, breakdown, granulation and drainage.

How often should we clean it?

- Daily
- As ordered by your child's doctor
- More frequent care is needed if:
 - Skin becomes irritated (stoma or neck wound)
 - Dressing or ties are visibly soiled

Equipment you will need

Always have essential equipment (spare tracheostomy tubes, oxygen, suction machine, resuscitation bag and mask). See the Essential Equipment Checklist in your handbook for a detailed list.

For cleaning your child's stoma:

- Sterile water
- Small cup for water
- Cotton swabs (Q tips)
- Gauze or clean wash cloth
- Tracheostomy ties and scissors
- Stoma dressings
- Syringe (for use with cuffed tubes only)
- Medicine for the skin if ordered

Steps for Setup

1. Get a trained helper. Routine stoma care requires two people.
2. Wash hands.
3. Gather all the supplies and set them up on a cleaned surface.
4. Pour the sterile water into a small cup and dampen cotton swabs and gauze with water.
5. Have another gauze and cotton swabs for drying.
6. If ordered, sprinkle nystatin powder onto gauze.
7. Cut clean trach ties to the correct size.



1 of 3

To Learn More

- Respiratory Care
206-987-2258
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

Steps for cleaning the stoma



1

Place your child on their back with a rolled blanket or large towel under their shoulders. This will cause the head to fall back, allowing you better access to the neck. Swaddling - wrapping a baby or young child's upper body and arms snugly in a blanket or sheet - will make them feel secure and keep their hands away from the stoma.



2

Put gloves on.



3

Suction your child's tracheostomy before starting stoma care. See "Suctioning Your Child's Trach" for instructions.

Clean stoma and neck



1

Hold
Two trained caregivers are needed for stoma care. Have one person hold the tracheostomy tube in place while the other person removes the dirty ties and dressing.

For the safety of your child, it is important that the person holding the trach stays completely focused on keeping the trach in place so the trach tube does not come out.



2

Clean
Wet a cotton swab. Keeping the trach in place, clean around the stoma site.
Start at the stoma and roll the swab away.
Use the swab for only 1 swipe, then discard.
Repeat process until the stoma is satisfactorily cleaned.



3

Dry
Use a new swab to dry around the stoma site.
Start at the stoma and roll the swab away.
Use the swab for only 1 swipe, then discard.
Repeat process until the stoma is satisfactorily dried.



4 **Clean**

Use a wet, clean, soft washcloth or wet gauze to wash the remaining neck area. **Start at the flange and swipe away.**



5 **Dry**

Use a clean, dry gauze to dry the remaining neck area. **Start at the flange and swipe away.**



6

Apply medicine to neck as ordered. Start at the back of neck and pat forward towards the stoma. Stop when you reach the flange of the trach tube.

Inspect the site

- 1** When the tracheostomy ties are off, you have a better view of the stoma site and neck. Check for skin redness, irritation and breakdown. Contact otolaryngology if granulation is developing and for wound advice.

Replace dressing and trach ties



- 1** Place new dressing around the trach tube.



- 2** Secure the tracheostomy tube to the neck using velcro tracheostomy ties. Tracheostomy ties should be tight enough to hold the tracheostomy tube securely in place.



- 3** Check both sides of the neck one at a time (they should be snug and even). One finger should fit in between the tracheostomy tie and neck.