

Tracheostomy care – the basics



Every disability has a possibility



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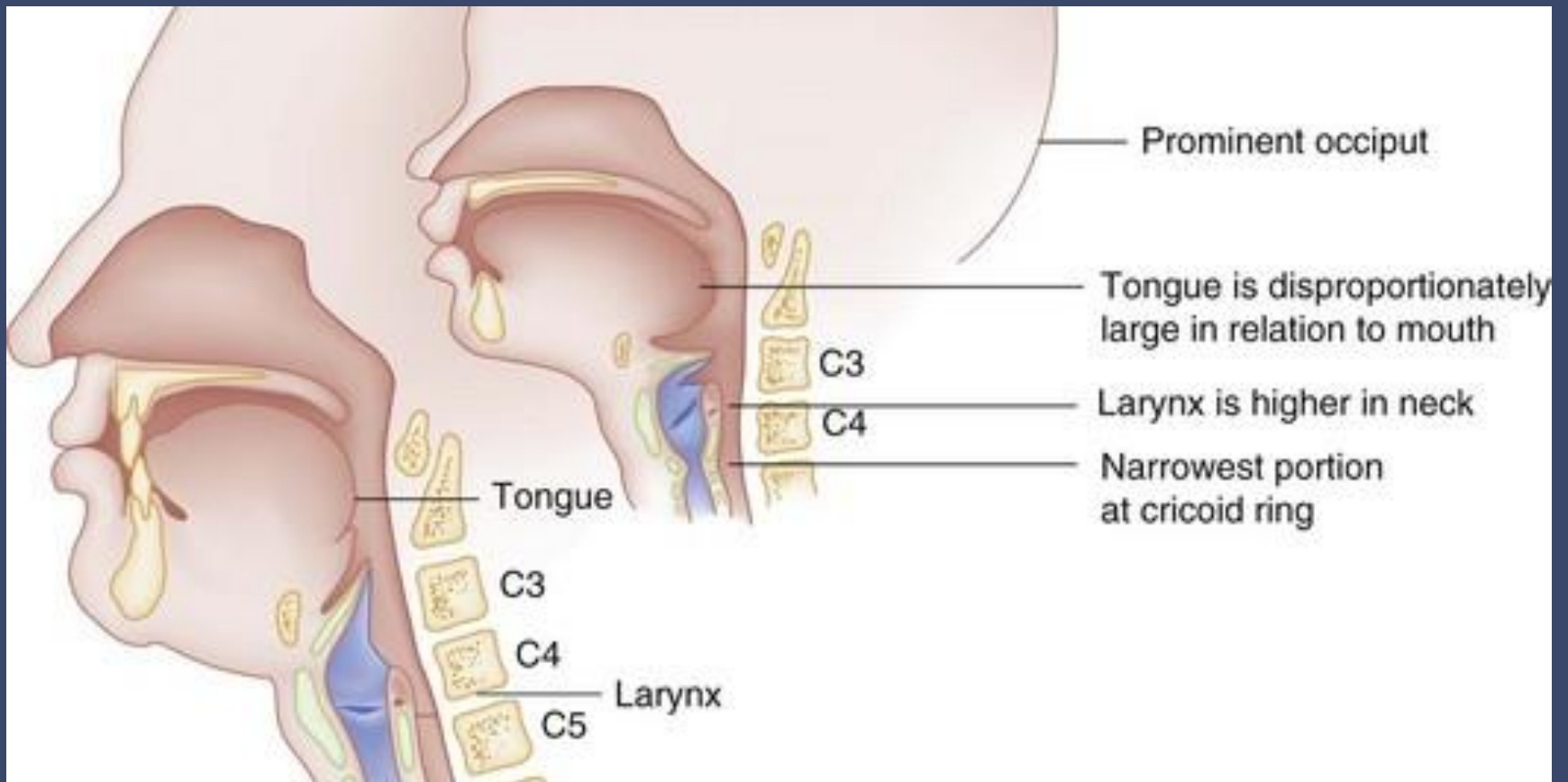


- Anatomy of airways (difference between adult and child)
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Comparison of adult and paediatric airways. (From Finucane BT: Principles of Airway Management. Philadelphia, FA Davis, 1988.)



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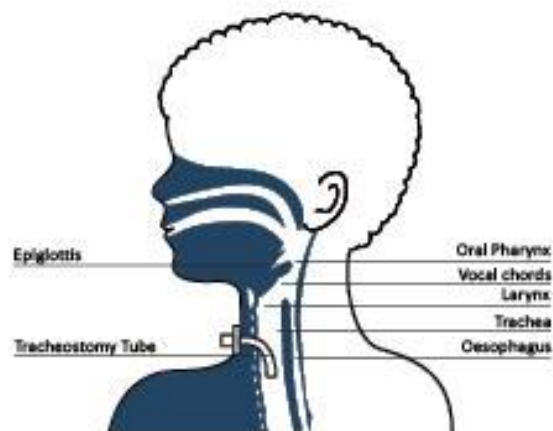
What is breathing?

When you breathe in or inhale, air (with oxygen) goes into the nose or mouth. When you breathe out or exhale, air (carbon dioxide) flows out of the nose or mouth. Without breathing, our most important body parts like the heart and the brain would not be able to work.



What is a tracheostomy?

A tracheostomy is a hole in the throat that helps your child to breathe. The hole, or stoma, is created by specialist doctors during an operation called a tracheotomy. Once this heals, it is held open by a small hollow pipe called a tracheostomy tube.



Reasons for daily tracheostomy tube change

Tracheotomy change is done every day for the following reasons:

- Prevents biofilm/plaque building up, which can block the inside of the very narrow tracheostomy tube of a child.
- The routine of daily change makes everyone involved feel comfortable to change the tube in case of an emergency (nurses, mothers and other caregivers).
- Lowers the risk of infection if the skin around the tube is kept clean and dry

NB: wait 30minutes after a feed before changing the tube



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Preparation for changing the tube

Place all supplies onto a clean dry surface and have your suction machine with tubing and catheter cut to length ready



- Clean tracheostomy tube with tapes attached
- Lubricant
- Scissors
- Pipe cleaner and tooth brush
- Swabs with soap
- Wet swabs to wipe soap away
- Dry swabs to dry the skin





Position the patient with a roll under the shoulders, or older children may sit with mirror in front of them

How to position your child



Baby's position:

Lay your child down with the shoulders raised on a roll (towel, pillow or a cloth) so that the head falls back slightly and the tracheostomy is easy to reach.



Older child's position:

An older child should sit in a chair in front of a mirror to understand what is going on and learn to change their own tracheostomy tube.

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The supplies you will need



Introducer must be inside tracheostomy tube



Flat cotton tape and scissors



Cream



Soapy cloth, wet cloth & dry cloth



Pipe cleaner to clean the inside of the tube and toothbrush for outside



Have everything ready before you change the tracheostomy tube

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Method of suctioning

Cut the catheter to fit: use the spare trachea as a guide if you are not sure of the depth.

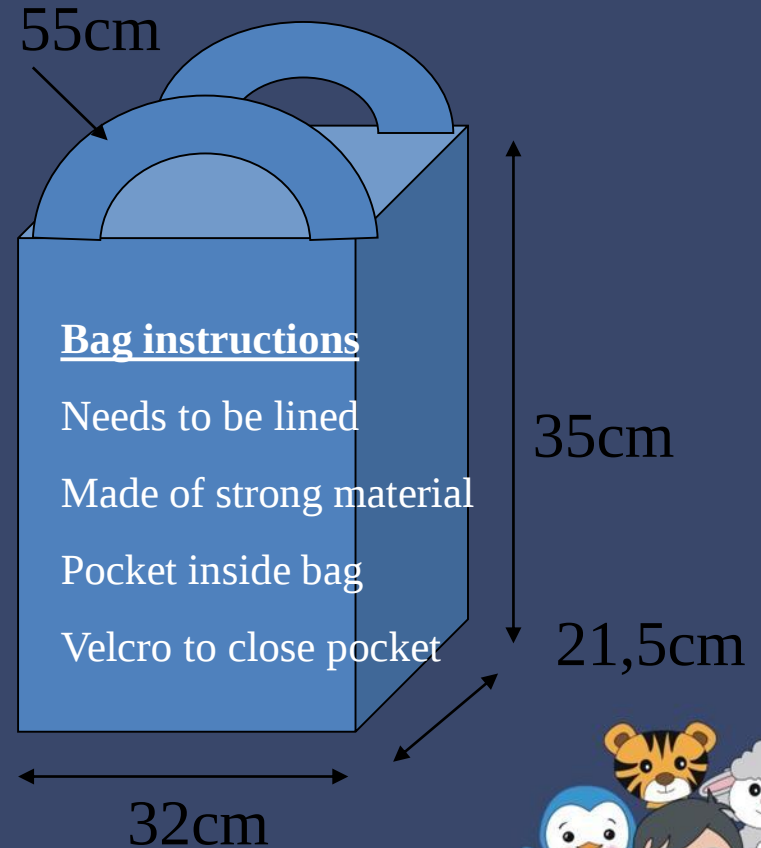
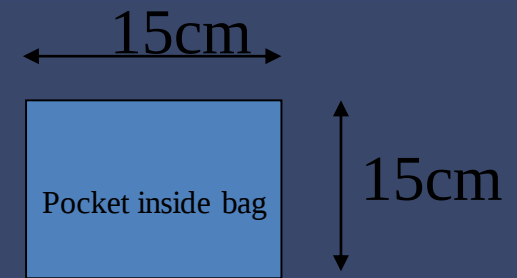
- Connect the suction catheter to the suction tubing
- Switch on the suction machine
- Insert the catheter into the trachea tube
- You have to cut the catheter so that it only goes as deep as the length of the tube



Hand-held syringe suction

The trache bag

- Spare tracheostomy tube
- Scissors
- Portable suction machine
- Catheter
- Hand-held resuscitator for those on a ventilator



Complications

- Trachea tube comes out (accidental)
- Blocked trachea tube (secretions/ blood)
- Infection



Symptoms of respiratory distress/blockage of trachea tube

- Difficulty in breathing, fast breathing
- Fast pulse and restlessness
- Grunting, noisy, whistling, stridulous breathing
- Cyanotic
- Recession (pulling in of the skin between the ribs, and below the breast bone)
- Frightened look on face
- Cannot wake the child
- Bobbing head
- Child cannot breath when lying down
- No air can be heard moving through the trachea tube



Symptoms of infection in trachea

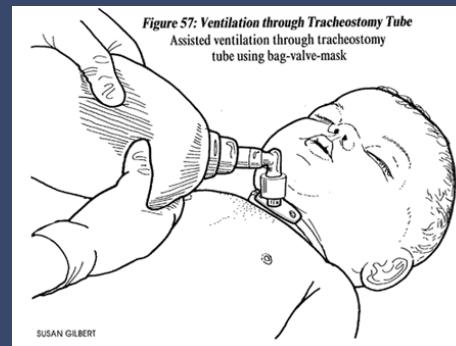
Secretions

- Change in colour (yellow, green, blood tinged)
- Thick secretions/ phlegm
- Increased amount of secretions
- Secretions smell



What to do in case of emergency

- **If in doubt - change trachea tube**
- Use Ambubag to give 2 rescue breaths if symptoms do not improve after the trachea tube has been changed
- Feel for pulse...if no pulse – start cardiac compressions
- Call for help, or the ambulance, or go to nearest hospital if someone can drive you.



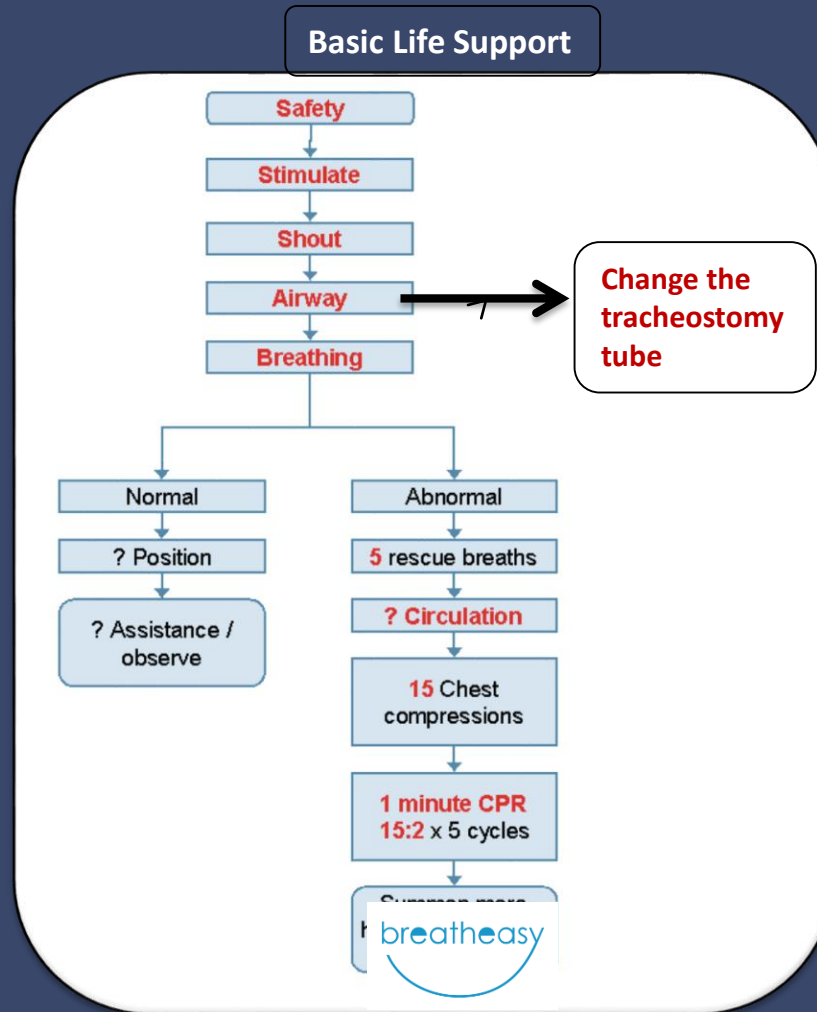


Basic Life Support

A

B

C



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