How to Care for a Tracheostomy Stoma

Clean your child’s trach site once each day, and whenever it needs cleaning.

First, if your child has an inner cannula, you will need to make half-strength hydrogen peroxide:
— Mix four tablespoons of water and four tablespoons of hydrogen peroxide in a clean bowl or container.
— Throw away what you do not use at the end of the day.

What you need:
☐ One cup of warm, soapy water
☐ One cup with sterile water
☐ Half-strength hydrogen peroxide solution, if trach has inner cannula
☐ Sterile normal saline and cotton tipped applicator, if trach has inner cannula
☐ Gloves, if trach has inner cannula
☐ 5 or more cleaning tools (may be cotton swabs, cotton tipped applicators, gauze, or pre-moistened saline wipes)
☐ Gauze pads
☐ 2 or more clean wash cloths
☐ Velcro trach ties, cut to neck size
☐ yes ☐ no  Gauze pad with a slit
☐ yes ☐ no  Cotton swabs, if your doctor prescribes cream or ointment
☐ Someone to help you
☐ Soap or alcohol-based hand rub
☐ Paper Towels

What to do:
1. Position your child. You may use a blanket roll under the shoulders to help bend the neck back. This can make it easier to reach the trach.

2. Clean your hands with soap and water for 15 - 30 seconds. Rinse, then dry with
clean paper towels. Have the person helping you clean their hands too.
If your hands are not visibly dirty, you can use alcohol-based hand rub to clean
them using the following steps:

1. Put enough alcohol-based hand rub to fill the palm of your hand.
2. Spread the hand rub over all parts of your hands.
3. Rub hands until dry.

3. Dip 4 cleaning tools into warm, soapy water, or use pre-moistened saline wipes.
   Dip only clean, unused cleaning tools into the warm, soapy water.

4. Use a different cleaning tool for each of the 4 times you clean around the stoma.

5. If the trach has an inner cannula:
   1. Put on clean gloves.
   2. Unlock the inner cannula.
   3. Remove the inner cannula. Do not touch the part of the cannula that goes
      into the trach.
   4. Put it into the half strength hydrogen peroxide solution
   5. Clean the inner cannula with the cotton tipped applicator and sterile normal
      saline
   6. Rinse in sterile normal saline and gently shake out any liquid that is inside
   7. Put the inner cannula back into your child’s trach, and lock it in
   8. Take off the gloves and clean your hands.

6. Have the person helping you hold the trach tube in place while you take off the
   trach ties. Have them hold the trach tube in place the whole time that the ties are
   off.

7. Use a different cleaning tool for each of the 4 times you clean around the stoma.
   When cleaning around your child's stoma, begin at the opening and wash outward
   in a circular motion. Repeat this three more times using a new cleaning tool each
time you start. Take care not to get water or soap into the stoma while you are
   cleaning.

8. Wash the rest of your child’s neck with a clean washcloth moist with warm, soapy
   water, and then rinse with a fresh clean washcloth with warm clean water. You can
   also use wet gauze pads or pre-moistened saline wipes.
9. Dry your child’s neck well with a clean, dry washcloth or with clean, dry gauze.

10. Your child’s doctor may sometimes prescribe a cream or ointment to put on the skin near the trach opening or under the trach ties. If so, put a small amount of the medicine on a cotton swab and rub gently on the area.

11. If needed, put the notched gauze pad under the wings of the trach tube.


13. Make sure you can only slide one finger between the trach ties and your child’s neck. This is done to be sure the ties are tight enough so the trach tube can’t fall out by accident, but not too tight.

14. Clean your hands when you are done.

15. Thank your child for behaviors that were helpful.

Now that you’ve read this:
☐ Show your nurse or doctor how you mix half-strength hydrogen peroxide if your child has an unner cannula. (Check when done.)

☐ Show your nurse or doctor how you care for your child’s stoma. (Check when done.)

☐ Show your nurse or doctor how you change your child’s trach ties. (Check when done.)
If you have any questions or concerns,  
☐ call your child’s doctor or  ☐ call ______________________

If you want to know more about child health and illness, visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children’s Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-933-1400  
866-933-6459  
www.phoenixchildrens.org  
Facebook: facebook.com/theemilycenter  
Twitter: @emilycenter  
Pinterest: pinterest.com/emilycenter

Disclaimer  
The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children’s Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.
#1070

**How to Care for a Tracheostomy Stoma**

Name of Health Care Provider: _______________________________
Date returned: _______________ ☐ db

**Family Review of Handout**

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.
Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you say this handout is interesting to read? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading this handout? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any questions about the subject? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what?

Si usted desea esta información en español, por favor pídesela a su enfermero o doctor.
Is there anything you don’t like about the drawings?  □ Yes  □ No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

The Emily Center  602-933-1395
Health Education Specialist
Phoenix Children’s Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

Thank you for helping us!