

tracheostomy safety toolkit

The **Super Safe Kids Tracheostomy Safety Toolkit** helps kids and families work together with the healthcare team for safe care of a tracheostomy.

The tools are designed to improve health outcomes by helping families:

- Understand common questions and practices for tracheostomies
- Prepare to manage common tracheostomy emergencies

This toolkit is not intended as a substitute for the medical advice of physicians. The reader should regularly consult a physician in matters relating to his/her health, and particularly with respect to any symptoms that may require diagnosis or medical attention.

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More at
[SuperSafeKidsBooks.com](https://www.SuperSafeKidsBooks.com)

- **Buy the book** *Tracheostomy Tube Safety for Kids*



PACKING YOUR Tracheostomy Emergency Kit

Having a stocked emergency kit is an absolute must with a tracheostomy. Here's what to include in yours.

Laminate this list and keep it in the emergency bag. You can mark items as you use them so you remember to replace them in the bag.

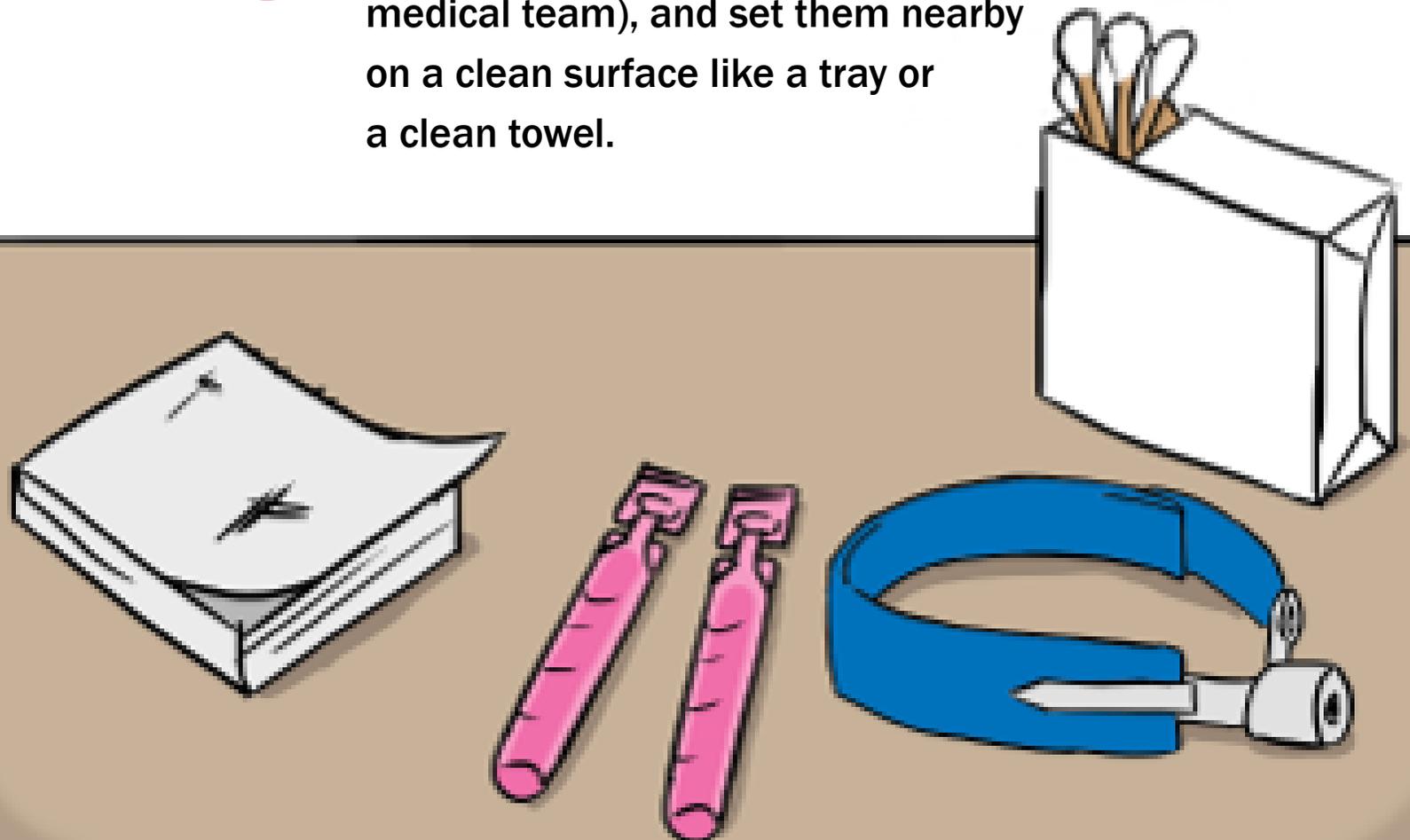
- Hand sanitizer and alcohol wipes
- Two back-up tracheostomy tubes:
One in the current prescribed size, and another that is one size smaller,
just in case the current size won't go in easily
- Water-based lubricant
- Extra trach ties and scissors (if you use the type of trach ties that need
to be cut to length)
- Sterile saline
- Cotton swabs and split gauze
- Manual resuscitator (Ambu® bag)
- Suction machine with extra canister, filters, catheters and tubing and
power cord.
- Oxygen tank or portable concentrator
- Pulse oximeter
- Medical gloves and masks, if needed and/or available
- Syringe (to put air into cuffed tracheostomy tubes)

GUIDE TO

Daily Tracheostomy Tube Care

Tracheostomy care every day is an important part of being safe with a tracheostomy tube. Here's how to do it.

- 1** Wash hands well. Some people also put on medical gloves.
- 2** Gather all the materials (gauze, cotton swabs, sterile water, saline or other materials recommended by the medical team), and set them nearby on a clean surface like a tray or a clean towel.



3

Loosen and remove trach ties carefully, while holding the tracheostomy tube firmly in the stoma.

4

Clean around the stoma and tracheostomy tube, looking closely to make sure the skin looks healthy.

5

Make sure the skin smells clean, and listen to hear the air moving through the tracheostomy tube.

6

Put a new trach tie on and secure it carefully.

7

Wash hands again.



ALL ABOUT

Tracheostomy filters, valves and caps

A **filter** is a plastic or mesh cover that filters the air to keep small particles out of the tracheostomy tube. Filters come in different shapes and sizes. Some filters can be connected to oxygen tanks or concentrators. A heat-moisture exchanger (**HME**) is a type of filter that warms and moistens air before it goes into the body through the tracheostomy tube.

If a filter falls off, it should be cleaned well with a disinfecting wipe or replaced with a fresh filter.

A **speaking valve** is a cover that is placed on the tracheostomy tube to allow the user to speak. It allows air into the tracheostomy tube, but not out. Instead, the user breathes out through the nose and mouth, which allows air to pass the vocal chords to make sounds.

When kids are better able to breathe on their own, the healthcare team might prescribe using a **cap**. A cap looks like a tiny little top hat. It covers the hole in the tracheostomy tube so the user has to breathe through the nose and mouth instead of through the tracheostomy tube. Using a cap, or **capping**, is usually a step in the process of preparing for life without a tracheostomy tube.

HOW TO

Reuse a Tracheostomy Tube

Sometimes, you might have to clean and reuse a tracheostomy tube. Here's how to make sure it's safe to use again.

1

Soak the tube in hot, soapy water for an hour.

2

Clean the inside and outside of the tube with a cotton swab or brush, and rinse it with hot water.

3

Bring a pot of water to a rapid boil, and remove the water from the heat.

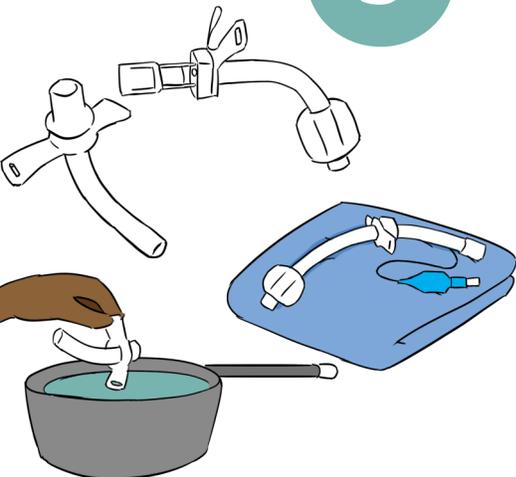
4

Place the tracheostomy tube in the water and cover the pot until the water is cool.

5

Let the tracheostomy tube air dry on a clean towel.

Now the tracheostomy tube is ready to be used again.



BEING SAFE AROUND FRIENDS with a Tracheostomy Tube

When a friend or family member has a tracheostomy, they need you to be careful and pay attention so they can stay safe.

1

No pulling or tugging. A tracheostomy tube has to stay in place for breathing. Never pull on the tracheostomy tube or anything that is attached to it, like a speaking valve, a ventilator or a cap.

2

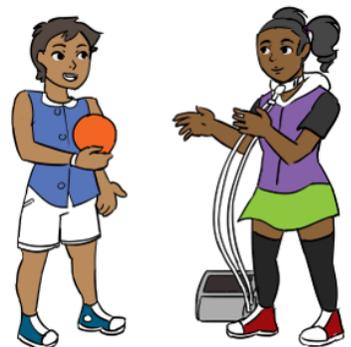
No bumping or crashing. Bumping into a tracheostomy tube can hurt and make it harder to breathe. You can play safely by making sure not to bump into it.

3

Leave some space. Make sure to keep a safe amount of space so you don't accidentally bump into the tracheostomy tube, and try not to step over parts of a ventilator.

4

Have fun! Don't be afraid to have fun with friends and family members who have tracheostomy tubes.



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