

## *Greenwich Hospital*

### **Tracheostomy Care: Cleaning the Cannula**

#### **PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET**

#### **Why do I need to clean my tracheostomy tube?**

It is important to keep the area around your tracheostomy opening (stoma) and your tracheostomy tube clean. This helps to prevent infections from bacteria or viruses entering your breathing system through the stoma or tube. Supplies can be purchased at most retail pharmacies and medical supply stores.

#### **What supplies will I need?**

- Gloves
- Clean disposable inner cannula if you are using disposable products
- Hydrogen peroxide and sterile water/saline mixed in equal parts
- Clean small wash basin
- Small non-abrasive brush or pipe cleaners
- Gauze pads (preferably 4x4)

#### **How do I clean my tracheostomy?**

You should thoroughly understand the cleaning procedure before attempting this independently. Your nurse will instruct you how to clean your tracheostomy.

#### **Reusable Inner Cannula:**

1. Wash your hands. If you have someone helping you, that person must also wash hands.
2. Prepare your small basin with sterile water/saline and hydrogen peroxide.
3. Put on gloves.
4. Hold the neck flange (face plate of tracheostomy tube) steady with one hand, and with the other hand grasp the twist lock inner cannula connector. Carefully unlock it using a counterclockwise motion.



5. Pull the inner cannula out of the outer tube using a downward motion.
6. Place the soiled inner cannula in the small basin of sterile water/saline and hydrogen peroxide.
7. Cleanse the outside and inside of the inner cannula with the non-abrasive brush or pipe cleaners. Be sure to gently remove all crusted mucus.

8. Rinse the inner cannula by pouring more of the sterile water/saline through it and over the outside of it. Be sure to remove all of the hydrogen peroxide.
9. Gently shake off excess fluid on the inner cannula and let it either air dry or wipe it dry with a sterile gauze pad.
10. Hold the neck flange steady with one hand and reinsert the clean twist-lock inner cannula into the outer tube. Secure it by gently twisting it clockwise until the dot on the inner cannula lines up with the dot on the outer tube.



#### **Disposable Inner Cannula:**

1. Wash your hands. If you have someone helping you, that person must also wash hands.
2. Put on gloves.
3. Hold the neck flange (face plate of tracheostomy tube) steady with one hand, and with the other hand grasp the snap-lock on the connector of the inner cannula and pull the inner cannula out of the outer tube. Use a downward motion.



4. Discard the soiled inner cannula in a plastic trash bag and throw out in your regular trash.
5. Gently squeeze the snap-lock of the new inner cannula and insert it into the outer tube. Release the snap-lock connector when it securely locks onto both sides of the connector rim of the outer tube.

(See the other Patient Education Handouts for information on how to change the twill ties and clean around the stoma.)

Source: Mallinckrodt, Inc. @ [www.mallinckrodt.com](http://www.mallinckrodt.com) Retrieved May 2005.

*For more Patient Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at [www.greenhosp.org](http://www.greenhosp.org) and Click on Patients & Visitors, then Patient Education*