

Greenwich Hospital

Tracheostomy Care: Cleaning Around the Stoma

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

Why do I need to clean around my tracheostomy stoma?

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?

- Cotton swabs
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Sterile water or normal saline
- Gloves
- Two clean, small basins
- Pre-cut tracheostomy dressing
- Gauze pads

How do I clean around my tracheostomy stoma?

1. Wash your hands.
2. Prepare a mixture of equal parts of hydrogen peroxide and sterile water/saline in a clean, small basin. Also pour a small amount of the sterile water/saline by itself into a small, clean basin.
3. Put on gloves.
4. If you are wearing a tracheostomy dressing, remove the soiled one and discard in a plastic trash bag.
5. Dip a cotton swab into a clean mixture of hydrogen peroxide and sterile water/saline.
6. Gently roll the cotton swab between the tracheostomy tube and the skin around the stoma. Clean from the stoma outward to prevent from pushing mucus or microorganisms into the stoma.



7. Repeat the cleaning process until you have removed all wet or dried mucus. Use a clean cotton swab each time.
8. Rinse the skin with clean cotton swabs dipped in the basin with just sterile water/saline to remove all of the hydrogen peroxide.
9. You can use a dry gauze pad to pat dry the skin surrounding the stoma.
10. If you are wearing tracheostomy dressings, replace with a clean one.

(See the other Patient Education Handouts for instructions on how to change your twill ties, and how to clean your tracheostomy tube)

Source: Mallinckrodt, Inc. @ www.mallinckrodt.com Retrieved May 2005.

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