

# PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE

## TRACHEAL SUCTIONING

1. Verify student orders are current and complete. Note the size of suction catheter (Fr) and depth of suction catheter insertion (cm).
2. Explain procedure at student's developmental level. Consider self-management goals and encourage participation as appropriate.
3. Perform hand hygiene. Place the supplies on a clean surface. Open packages and maintain standard precautions. Do not touch part of catheter to be inserted.
  - a. Suction catheter
  - b. Suction machine with tubing
  - c. Gloves
  - d. Ambu bag
4. Test suction source prior to student use. Occlude the suction tubing to adjust suction pressure between 80-120 mm Hg.
5. Position student comfortably. Trach site should be visible.
6. Attach suction catheter to suction machine tubing.
7. Gently insert catheter into the tracheostomy tube to the appropriate depth measurement.
8. Apply continuous suction as the catheter is withdrawn.
9. Monitor student tolerance. Limit suctioning to 5-10 seconds or less.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR CARE

- Report changes in student's respiratory status, level of consciousness, or level of comfort with tracheal suctioning.
- Document the type, amount, and color of secretions, and general condition of the stoma and integrity of surrounding skin.
- Tracheal suctioning should occur as needed based on student condition versus a scheduled procedure.
- Standard precautions are recommended in the home and community setting. Sterile gloves may be included in the suctioning kit but are not required.
- The catheter should not be inserted until resistance met. Gagging or coughing may indicate the catheter has been advanced beyond the length of the tracheostomy tube. This can cause irritation to tracheal tissue.
- The routine installation of normal saline (NS) is not recommended. Research shows the use of NS can impair gas exchange and increase risk of infection.
- Evidence does not support rotating the catheter or turning the child's head side-to-side for suctioning.
- Never reinsert a suction catheter into trach that was used to suction the nose or mouth.
- Closed-system suction uses a plastic sheath to enclose the catheter and attach directly to tracheostomy or ventilator.

