

Purpose: Properly and safely change tracheostomy tube ties; Ensure that tracheostomy tube is secure; Prevent infection and skin breakdown.

Clinical Considerations: Tracheostomy ties are available in a wide range of styles with velcro being the most common form of tracheostomy tube tie fastening. Most tracheostomy tube ties can be removed by releasing the velcro but scissors may be necessary to cut the tracheostomy tube tie for removal – *avoid cutting the tubing of the tracheostomy tube pilot balloon*. Tracheostomy tube tie changes may require two trained caregivers. If patient requires tracheostomy tube tie changes more frequently than daily, ties must be washed with mild soap and water, rinsed thoroughly, allowed to thoroughly dry and then re-used.

Assemble Supplies:

- Clean gloves
- Blunt nose scissors
- Tracheostomy tube tie, cut to appropriate size
- Wash cloth or gauze
- Mild Soap and tap water

Preparation:

1. Refer to physician's order for detailed instructions specific to the patient.
2. Explain and prepare the patient for the procedure.
3. Prior to performing the procedure, assemble appropriate supplies and plan all actions.
4. Utilize appropriate infection control techniques while preparing, using, and discarding supplies.
5. Designate tasks if procedure will be performed using two trained caregivers.
6. To optimize ease of procedure, position the patient by using shoulder roll or other positioning device as appropriate to hyperextend neck, if necessary.

Procedure:

1. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer as appropriate and apply clean gloves using clean technique.
2. Swaddle pediatric patient if necessary or have one person hold patient in comfortable, secure position for procedure.
3. Inspect area under existing tracheostomy tube ties.
4. Clean with mild soap and tap water, dry well.
5. Maintain one hand on tracheostomy tube at all times for the following steps until new or clean tracheostomy tube ties are placed and secure.
6. Leave existing tracheostomy tube ties in place if possible and attach one end of new or clean velcro tracheostomy tube tie to either left or right tracheostomy tube flange hole.
7. Maintain one hand on tracheostomy tube at all times and then bring opposite end of tracheostomy tube tie around back of neck to opposite tracheostomy tube flange hole.
8. Continuing to maintain one hand on tracheostomy tube at all times, remove existing tracheostomy tube tie from opposite tracheostomy tube flange hole; then secure new tie.

Tracheostomy Tie Change Protocol

9. Remove existing tracheostomy tie from initial tracheostomy tube flange hole, ensuring that the tie has appropriate space allowance (index finger for adult; tip of little finger for pediatric patient) between tracheostomy tie and neck. Trim extra length of tracheostomy tube tie if necessary.
10. Properly dispose of or clean all supplies.
11. Document the procedure, including that the:
 - a. tracheostomy tube is secure,
 - b. status of skin under tracheostomy tube tie, and
 - c. tightness of tracheostomy tube tie.