

Suctioning

What is suctioning?

Suctioning consists of inserting a small catheter (connected to negative pressure) into the nose, mouth or tracheostomy tube to remove secretions.

Why is suctioning needed for my child?

Suction is needed when a child has secretions that he/she is unable to remove by coughing.

How will I know my child needs suctioning?

- The "gurgly" sound of secretions
- Your child is having trouble breathing
- Your child's color looks grey or blue (around eyes, mouth, fingernails or toenails).

How do I suction?

1. Wash your hands.
2. Gather equipment:
 3. Water soluble lubricant
 4. Suction catheter kit
 5. Suction machine
 6. Sterile water
7. Turn on suction machine.
8. Open suction catheter kit. Everything inside the kit is sterile (free from germs). Keep everything inside the kit sterile as you open it.
9. Remove sterile gloves package from kit and place on clean surface.
10. Put some sterile water in the suction catheter kit base.
11. Put on the sterile gloves (one hand will stay sterile, the other won't).

12. Pick up the suction catheter with your sterile hand.
13. With the other hand, pick up connecting tubing from the suction machine and attach it to the suction catheter.
14. For nasal suction, apply a water-soluble lubricant (such as KY Jelly) to the end of the suction catheter.
15. Pass catheter into airway until child coughs.
16. Apply intermittent suction (no longer than seven seconds).
17. Rotate catheter between thumb and forefinger while withdrawing the catheter.

18. For oral suction, follow above steps except insert catheter into throat through the mouth. For tracheostomy tube suction, follow above steps except insert the catheter into the tracheostomy tube. The catheter should only be inserted just past the bottom end of the tracheostomy tube.
19. Allow child to rest (15-20 seconds).
20. Rinse the catheter by suctioning sterile water from the suction catheter kit base.
21. Repeat suction if needed.
22. Discard catheter and gloves.
23. Turn off suction pump.
24. Wash your hands.

When should I call Telehealth Nursing (651-229-3890)?

- Your child has a hard time breathing even after suctioning
- Increased secretions
- Secretion changes color
- Fever
- Lip or nail color becomes darker

[Appointment: 651-290-8707](#) [Refer a Patient: 651-325-2200](#) [Pediatric Expert Consult](#) [More Ways to Contact Us](#)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](tel:651-229-3890).