

TEACHING PLAN: Tracheostomy Care

POLICY: Patients who undergo a tracheotomy and their family must demonstrate understanding of and performance of the following:

1. The anatomical changes related to the procedure.
2. Assessment of and management of a tracheostomy.
3. Awareness of possible problems/complications in tracheostomy management.
4. The important roles that tracheostomy care, humidification and suctioning play in maintaining airway patency.

DESIRED

- PATIENT OUTCOMES:
1. Patient and/or family will verbalize understanding of anatomical changes related to tracheostomy.
 2. Patient and/or family will verbalize understanding of and accurately demonstrate tracheostomy care.
 3. Patient and/or family will verbalize understanding and accurately demonstrate prevention of mucous plug and suctioning.
 4. Patient and/or family will verbalize understanding and accurately demonstrate first aid/emergency procedures for neck breathers.
 5. Patient will successfully communicate.

- ASSESSMENT:
1. Assess patient's and/or family's ability to learn necessary content for post-op management (i.e. ability to attend during education sessions, to follow verbal instructions and to read/comprehend written material).
 2. Assess patient's and/or family's ability to verbalize understanding of/return demonstrate:
 - a. Psychomotor skills necessary for tracheostomy management.
 - b. Methods/techniques of managing potential stoma/tracheostomy complications.
 3. Assess patient's self image and adjustment to tracheostomy and its potential impact on ability to learn.

NURSING CARE: Content should be presented as often as possible during hospitalization. Patient and/or family will need repeated opportunities to review information and to practice skills needed for independent tracheostomy management.

PRE-OPERATIVE

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- SESSION: 1. Review with patient and/or family his/her understanding of planned surgical procedure.
2. Review post-operative care:
- a. Use of humidified air/oxygen and suctioning to maintain patent airway.
 - b. Suctioning of secretions, removal of secretions from trach dressing.
 - c. Use of alternative methods of communication if applicable (i.e. communication board).
4. Review availability of community resources (i.e., VNA, American Cancer Society).

POST-OPERATIVE

SESSION: Arrange for family to be present at teaching sessions whenever possible.

1. SESSION I

- a. Explain to the patient/family the different parts and functions of the tracheostomy tube (inner cannula, outer cannula, obturator, locking device). Use a separate practice tracheostomy set to demonstrate functions of tracheostomy parts.
- b. Explain to the patient and family the rationale for the use of humidified oxygen/air and suctioning to maintain patent airway.
- c. Demonstrate removal of trach dressing and inner cannula to patient. (Refer to Lippincott Manual of Nursing Practice). Demonstrate/review deep suctioning technique and use of Yankauer, if applicable.
- d. Encourage patient to use communication aides if applicable. Instruct patient to cover tracheostomy tube to allow for vocalization.
- e. Encourage patient to verbalize concerns.
- f. Encourage patient to wipe off excess secretions from trach dressing (neck area). Instruct patient to cough and clear secretions with Yankauer suction.
- g. Discuss with patient signs and symptoms of respiratory distress and signs and symptoms of infection.
- h. Have a mirror available for patient to view tracheostomy and for use later with tracheostomy care. Instruct

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patient in inserting and removing tracheostomy plug.
Educate patient regarding rationale for trach plug.

2. SESSION II

- a. Reinforce teaching in Session I. Allow discussion as appropriate.
- b. Demonstrate removal of inner cannula. Give patient option to perform removal and reinsertion of tracheostomy inner cannula on him/herself or on a practice tracheostomy set.
- c. Have patient perform mouth care using Yankauer suctioning and oral swabs.
- d. Have patient remove trach dressing and re-apply. Refer to procedure for tracheostomy care.
- e. Have patient remove trach dressing and inner cannula. Have patient wash hands and demonstrate cleansing of inner cannula. Reinforce that clean versus sterile technique is followed at home.
- f. Have patient cleanse tracheostomy site as outlined in Lippincott Manual of Nursing Practice.
- g. Demonstrate reinsertion of clean inner cannula. Have patient remove and reinsert inner cannula.
- h. Have patient apply clean trach dressing.
- i. Nurse to demonstrate changing ties/trach holder if necessary.
- j. Have patient verbalize signs and symptoms of respiratory distress, signs and symptoms of infection, and skin breakdown.

3. SESSION III

- a. Review and reinforce teaching of Sessions I-II.
- b. Demonstrate to patient installation of normal saline into tracheostomy to be used as needed to stimulate cough, loosen secretions.
- c. Instruct patient/family in deep suctioning technique. Have patient/family return demonstrate deep suctioning technique.
- d. Introduce first aid measures for neck breathers:
 - 1) Discuss the need for a Medic-Alert bracelet.

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- 2) If family/significant other is qualified to perform CPR in the event of respiratory/cardiac arrest, discuss technique for mouth to neck breathing.
- 3) Discuss need for suctioning set-up at home and home humidified oxygen or air via trach mask. Instruct in rationale for use of humidification to keep secretions loose and maintain patent airway.
- 4) Patient should be discharged with the obturator corresponding to current tracheostomy tube. Instruct the patient/family how to use the obturator to replace the tracheostomy tube in case the tube becomes dislodged.

4. SESSION IV

- a. Reinforce teaching of Sessions I-III.
- b. When necessary, patient should change trach ties as outlined in Lippincott Manual of Nursing Practice.
- c. Discuss supplies and equipment required upon discharge:
 - 1) Humidified oxygen or air via trach mask
 - 2) Humidifiers are recommended for patient bedroom and living room
 - 3) Suctioning equipment, including Yankauer suction and long suction catheters
 - 4) Obturator corresponding to current tracheostomy tube
 - 5) Medic-Alert Bracelet
 - 6) Tracheostomy care supplies
- d. Prior to discharge home, ensure that all the above supplies and equipment has been arranged.
- e. Arrange for nursing home care referral for patient assessment and continued patient/family education.
- f. Arrange for other home referrals as needed (Social Services, home health aide, speech therapy, etc.).

APPROVAL: Nursing Standards Committee

EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/93

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