

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# How to Travel with a Tracheostomy

You can take your child out, even though your child has a tracheostomy. You can take your child to doctor's appointments, shopping, or to visit with friends and family.

However, you need to plan before you go out. Whenever your child leaves home, you need to carry the things you need to make your child comfortable, and to be ready for an emergency.

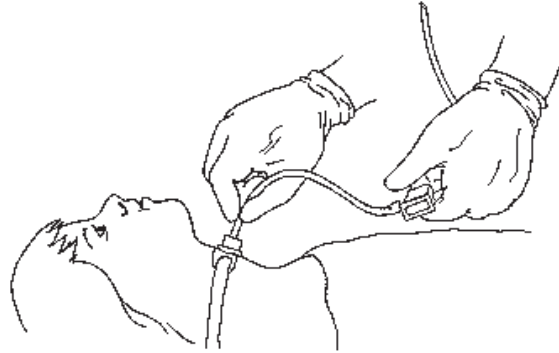
You need to know how long you will be away from home and what you will need in that time. How many suction catheters will you need? Is the battery in your suction machine fully charged? Do you have enough food and diapers?

Portable suction machines usually come with a carrying bag that can hold all the items you need. Many parents say it is easiest to keep that bag packed with the supplies they need for a trip. When they are ready to leave home, the bag is ready to go. When they return home, they replace the items they used so the bag is ready for the next trip. To travel, most families only need the packed bag and the suction machine.

## What should I carry in the trach travel bag?

When you pack your trach travel bag, which is also called the "Go Bag," check to make sure you have all of the items on the list on the next page.

- portable suction machine** This is the same suction machine you use at home, plugged into the wall. When you leave home, the battery provides the power. When you are home, make sure you always keep the battery charged. This way you can safely take your child out of the house at any time.
- suction catheters** Keep 3 or more suction catheters in your travel bag. When you are away from home, it can be hard to clean them.
- Delee mucous trap** This is a special kind of suction catheter that you can use if your electric suction machine stops working.
- bulb syringe** When your child coughs up into the trach, you can use a bulb syringe to suction it out.
- oxygen** If your child uses oxygen, make sure you have enough for the trip.
- Ambu bag or self-inflating mechanical ventilation bag** If your child stops breathing and needs CPR, you can use this bag to give breaths.
- two trach tubes** Pack one regular size trach tube, and one a size smaller. If your child's trach tube needs to be changed while you are out, you will be ready.
- trach ties** Cut trach ties and put them on the spare trach tubes. If you have an emergency, you will be ready to change and tie the new tube in place.
- artificial nose or HME (heat and moisture exchanger)** This keeps your child's trachea moist when she is not getting humidified air.
- shoulder roll** Keep a diaper or a wash cloth rolled and taped to hold its shape. It will be ready to be put in place under your child's shoulders when you do trach care.
- emergency phone numbers** You have a list of emergency phone numbers at home, near your telephone. Carry a copy of the same list in your travel kit. You will be ready for any emergency.
- short medical history** Keep a note in your travel kit that says
  - list of medicines your child takes
  - why your child has a trach
  - the trach size and trach type



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— information for rescue workers, such as: can your child can get artificial respiration through the nose or mouth if the trach comes out and cannot be replaced.

If you need help writing this medical history, ask your nurse or doctor.

Some parents also suggest:

- sterile water to rinse suction tubing
- normal saline to loosen a mucus plug
- sterile gloves or hand sanitizer to use when you can't wash your hands
- sterile gauze, baby wipes, or wash cloths for cleaning

## In your car

Before you go home a nurse or respiratory therapist will check to make sure your child can breathe safely while strapped in the car seat. The safest place for your child to ride is in their car seat. It is not safe to ride in a car with your child in your arms.

Keep a small rug with rubber backing (so it doesn't slide) folded up and under a seat in your car. If your child needs care when you are out, you can put your child on the rug, and not on the hot car or pavement.

Whenever you are in the car and your child needs your help, pull over, stop the car, and take care of your child. Do not get into an accident by trying to drive and give care at the same time!

## Long trips

You need to plan carefully when you take your child on a long trip. Before you go, talk to the company that supplies your home equipment.

Get the name of someone in the place where you are going who can help you with supplies.

Make sure the battery on your suction machine will last for the length of the trip.

When you take your child on an airplane, you need to call the special services department of the airline before you buy tickets. Many airlines can not take passengers with special needs. Tell the airline what equipment you are bringing with your child.

## Now that you've read this:

- Tell your nurse or doctor what you will pack in your travel kit, and what each item is for. (Check when done.)
- Tell your nurse or doctor three things to do when taking your child in a car. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,

- call your child's doctor or
- call \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to know more about child health and illness,  
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-546-1400  
888-908-5437  
[www.phoenixchildrens.com](http://www.phoenixchildrens.com)

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