

Transcript

While living with a tracheostomy, it is important to take good care of the opening in your neck, or stoma, to make sure you are breathing comfortably and to prevent infection.

To do this, first, remove any gauze around your stoma.

Gently clean the area of your neck with sterile water or sterile saline, making sure to remove any mucus or secretions. Pat the area dry with gauze to prevent irritation.

Carefully check the skin around your trach for signs of irritation or infection. Contact your healthcare provider if you notice: redness, swelling, hard areas, blood tinged secretions, a change in the color of your secretions, a foul smell, or if you have a fever of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit.

Once your trach area is clean, you may put a piece of gauze, called a trach sponge, around the stoma and under part of the trach plate. This special gauze has a slit that allows you to easily place it around the stoma area. Do not block the opening of the trach tube with the gauze. You need to be able to breathe through this opening. You should change your trach sponge if it is soiled and each time you do trach care.

When you are done, throw all of your used disposable supplies into a plastic bag and discard them.

If you have any questions about how best to perform trach care and how often to clean your stoma, or if you notice any signs of irritation or infection, contact your healthcare providers. They are there to help.