

Tracheostomy / Laryngectomy

When to Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor if you have problems after your tracheostomy or laryngectomy surgery. Make a plan to get help in case of an emergency. Talk to your local EMS (fire, ambulance and police) to let them know you may not be able to speak during an emergency. Wear a Medic Alert bracelet that shows you are a “neck breather”.

Call your doctor if you have any of the following:

- Shortness of breath
- A fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 degrees Celsius) or higher
- Signs of infection around your stoma (redness, warmth, swelling, or drainage)
- An increased amount of mucous (sputum)
- A change in the color of your sputum (yellow, green, brown)
- A change in the thickness of your sputum
- If you have problems coughing out your sputum
- Drainage around your tracheostomy tube (pus or blood)
- Pain that is worse and is not relieved by your pain medicine
- Nausea or vomiting
- Trouble with swallowing or eating

Get emergency help right away if:

- You have any trouble breathing.
- Your tracheostomy tube falls out and you cannot replace the tube.
- If you have bleeding that does not stop after putting pressure on the area.

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.