

Family Education Sheet

Home Care Instructions for a Trach Speaking Valve or Cap



Boston Children's Hospital

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What is a trach speaking valve or cap?

- A **tracheostomy speaking valve** is a small, button-like device that fits on the outside of the tracheostomy (trach) tube. It has a 1-way valve that opens when your child breathes in. This lets air come in through the tube. The valve closes when your child breathes out, sending air out through the nose and mouth. This lets air go through the vocal cords so your child can talk and make noise.
- A **tracheostomy cap** is a small cap that fits over the trach tube. It lets air go in and out through your child's nose and mouth when breathing, instead of through the trach tube.

What do I need to know?

- Your child's doctor will examine your child before you use a speaking valve or cap.
- Only use the speaking valve or cap when your child is fully awake and when an adult is watching him or her.
- If your child has a cuffed trach tube, he or she must be able to have the cuff completely deflated.
- Some speaking valves have an oxygen port.

What do I need to use the speaking valve or cap?

- Suction equipment
- Oxygen (if your child uses it) as prescribed

What should I watch for when using a speaking valve or cap?

- Watch for a faster than normal breathing rate
- Difficulty breathing
- Discomfort
- Lower oxygen saturation
- Change in skin color

When using a speaking valve, make sure you see the valve move in when your child takes a breath in. The valve should not bulge when your child breathes out.

Make sure your child can talk or make noises when using the speaking valve or cap.

How do I clean the speaking valve or cap?

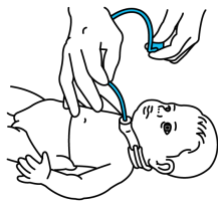
Follow the instructions that come with the equipment.

Whom can I call if I have questions?

Please contact your child's primary care doctor with any questions.

If your child needs emergency care, call 911 or your local emergency services provider.

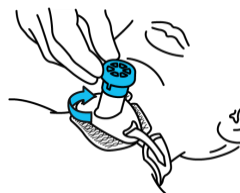
How do I use a speaking valve or cap?



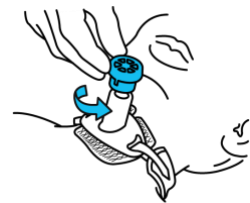
- 1 Suction the trach, if needed. Suction your child's mouth if needed.



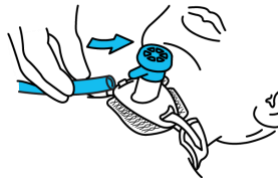
- 2 Completely deflate the cuff if the trach tube has one.



- 3 Put the valve or cap on the end of the trach tube and gently twist to secure the valve or cap.



- 4 **When using a speaking valve**, deliver oxygen by placing humidification oxygen over the speaking valve.



- 5 **With using an oxygen port on a speaking valve**, deliver oxygen by connecting one end of the oxygen tubing to the port. Connect the end to an oxygen source and turn on.



- 6 **When using a cap**, place oxygen over your child's nose or mouth.

Important: If your child shows signs of distress or discomfort, take the valve or cap off right away.

- 7 If your child is on a ventilator, you may need to increase peak inspiratory pressure (PIP) or tidal volume while using the speaking valve. This is because you need to completely deflate the cuff.