

700 Children's Drive  
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nationwidechildrens.org

## SUCTIONING NOSE AND MOUTH AT HOME

Suctioning your child's nose and mouth to remove mucus (thickened nose and throat secretions) will make it easier for him or her to breathe and eat.

### SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO BE SUCTIONED

- Your child may make choking noises or gurgling sounds.
- Your child may cough often.
- You may hear a rattling in his chest.
- When you touch your child's chest with the flat of your hand, you may feel a "rattling."
- An infant may have trouble sucking.
- Your child's lips may be blue or grey in color.

### YOU WILL NEED

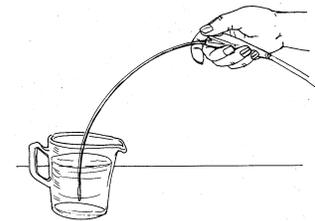
- Electric portable suction pump
- 2 sets of tubing (for electric pump)
- 2 dozen catheters, size \_\_\_\_
- Salt
- 16-ounce glass container
- Measuring spoons
- Tissues

#### For use with non-disposable catheters:

- 2 large jars with labels marked "Used" and "Clean", and lids
- 10-mL. syringe
- Large, clean pan with lid

### HOW TO SUCTION

1. Your child may sit on the bed or a chair.
2. If he wants to lie down, he should have a pillow under his head and shoulders.
3. Wash your hands well.
4. Fill the glass container with saline solution (salt water). To make saline, dissolve 1 level teaspoon of salt in 2 cups of tap water.
5. Attach the catheter to the pump.
6. Dip the tip of the catheter in saline. Cover the open port of the connector with your thumb to make a suction. Suction a small amount of saline through the tubing to make sure it is open (Picture 1).
7. Gently insert the catheter into a nostril. Keep the end of the connector open while inserting the catheter. Cover the open end of the connector and suction out the mucus (Picture 2).
8. Start pulling the catheter out. Twirl the catheter between your fingers to keep it from sticking to the lining of your child's nose. You may need to suction more than once.
9. Suction mucus from the mouth if necessary. **Do not suction the mouth first.** (This could cause germs to get into the respiratory tract.)
10. Suction saline through the tubing a few times during suctioning.



Picture 1



Picture 2 Suction your child's nose carefully while using a twirling motion.

## AFTER SUCTIONING

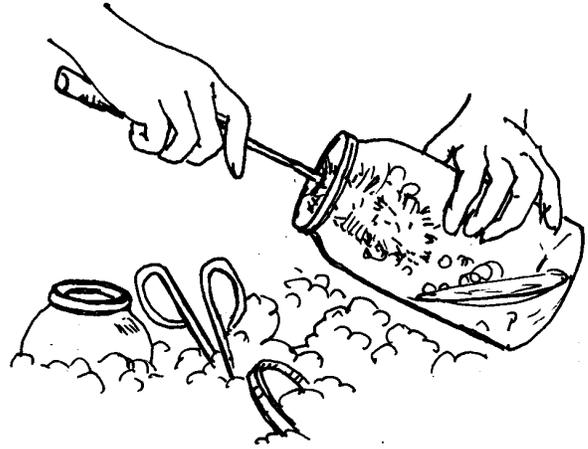
1. Suction saline through the tubing a few times after suctioning to clean the mucus out of the tubing.
2. Detach the catheter and place it in the jar labeled "Used." (If you are using a disposable catheter, throw it away.)
3. Your child may need to rest and be comforted after suctioning.

## HOW TO CLEAN THE EQUIPMENT

**All equipment should be cleaned every day.** If disposable catheters are used, you may skip steps 2 through 5 below.

1. Wash the suction machine jar and tubing in soapy water and rinse (Picture 3).
2. Wash the catheters in soapy water. Use the syringe to force the soapy water and rinse water through the catheters (Picture 4).
3. Place the washed catheters in a large pan. Cover with water.
4. Bring the water to a boil. Cover the pan with a lid and boil for 10 minutes. Let it cool.
5. Place the clean sterilized catheters in the jar labeled "Clean" and cover the jar.

If you have any questions, ask your doctor or nurse, or call \_\_\_\_\_.



**Picture 3** Wash the equipment well.



**Picture 4** Use a syringe to force soapy water through the catheter.