

Transporting Your Child with Respiratory Equipment

Your child is safest in the back seat. It is best to have a trained caregiver in the back seat with them when you travel. The trained caregiver can watch your child for any changes and respond to any needs.

If you are driving, you may not be able to get out of heavy traffic to care for your child's needs. To avoid delaying any child needs, it is important to have all the respiratory equipment needed (oxygen tanks, ventilator, suction, go bag, manual resuscitator) within arm's reach.

Go Bags

Children with a tracheostomy will need to have a "go bag" always packed and with the child. This "go bag" will contain all supplies needed to care for the tracheostomy and any problems that may arise. The "go bag" should contain:

- A trach of the same size
- Trach of the half size smaller
- Trach ties
- Suction catheters
- Dressings
- HME's
- Saline packets
- De Lee suction catheter
- A manual resuscitator
- An extra vent circuit if your child requires mechanical ventilation.

Car Seats

Your child should be in a car seat or restraint device that is right for your child's age and condition. Staff at the Kohl's Safety Center can help you decide the best option for your child. Use a car safety seat with a three-point or a five-point harness and no tray, shield, or armrest for a child with a tracheostomy.

Strollers

Babies and children who cannot walk need a sturdy stroller that is large enough to support them and hold all the equipment your child may need. Most strollers do not have a basket that can hold the weight of respiratory equipment. PT/OT will help evaluate your child's needs to determine the appropriate stroller. If a custom medical stroller is necessary, PT/OT will help with ordering one.

Tie down your child's equipment below the window line of your car. This can help protect your equipment in the event of an accident. The best place for equipment would be on the floor or on the seat within arm's reach.

Tanks

Tanks should be:

- Secured in the back seat, side-lying on the floor, pointing towards the doors.
- Padded to prevent rolling and to protect the tank stem from damage.

Never travel with a tank in the front seat or trunk of the car as this could lead to tank damage and explosion in the event of an accident.

Charging Equipment

Know the battery life of all your respiratory equipment. Be sure to have enough battery charge for the length of your trip. If needed, bring more external battery sources with you. Bring all electrical cords with you to charge the equipment when away from home.

Extended Travel

For extended travel, you will need to bring an extra supply of equipment and supplies for your child. Know the number of supplies needed for one day and pack enough for every day you will be away.

Contact your DME (Durable Medical Equipment) provider for guidance and questions about supplies or equipment needs while traveling.

Who to Call

If your child has a medical emergency, **call 911**. It is safest for an ambulance to take your child to the nearest emergency room. You can ride with your child. Be sure to bring the “Go bag” and any other equipment that might be needed.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7703