Emergency Reinsertion of a Tracheostomy Tube

If you need to reinsert a trach tube, use these steps to do it correctly and safely. If you have any questions or concerns, call your health care provider.

**Supplies**
- Tracheostomy tube with obturator
- Lubricant (wetting solution), water soluble such as Surgilube
- Syringe
- Trach ties

**Steps in Procedure**
1. Get the supplies together.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water.
3. Take out the inner cannula, if present.
   Deflate the cuff, if present.
4. Put the obturator into the outer cannula. Hold the obturator firmly in place with your thumb.

5. Put lubricant on the tip of the outer cannula and obturator. If you do not have a water-soluble lubricant, use water or saline.

6. Put the outer cannula with the obturator into your stoma. Use a curved upward motion.

   **Note:** If there is any crusting around the stoma, use a mixture of equal parts hydrogen peroxide and water. Wipe with a cotton tipped applicator to the area and then rinse well with water.

7. Hold the trach tube in place and take out the obturator.

8. Secure the tube with trach ties or a tracheostomy tube holder. Some people find it helpful to change the trach ties before reinserting a new tracheostomy tube. Read the handout **Changing Tracheostomy Ties** for more information.
9. Put the inner cannula (if present) into the outer cannula.

10. Inflate the cuff (if present) with air using the syringe. When inflated, the cuff will hold about 8 cc/ml of air.

**Note:** If you cannot get the trach tube in, call your doctor. If you have problems breathing, call for emergency medical help right away.

**Precautions**
1. Always be sure the trach tube is held securely in place with trach ties.
2. Keep the obturator in a special place, so you always know where it is.
3. Keep a spare trach tube at home.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have any questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.