

Advise to take Home

**PROTECTION
FOR YOUR
TRACHEOSTOMY**

**Prince Court Medical Centre
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Kuala Lumpur 50450
Phone Number 2160 0000 (24 hours)**



**PUSAT PERUBATAN
PRINCE COURT
MEDICAL CENTRE**

If you or someone you know is a handy sewer, you can use an attractive tee shirt material or singlet type material to make a cover, using ribbon bands with velcro fasteners on either end to hold the cover in place.

If you come up with any good ideas could you let us know, as we can pass them on to other patients.

Cravats are often worn by men as an attractive, practical tracheostomy tube cover. Women can get a large and varied collection of scarves and there are many different ways of wearing these. Lace collars are also available, and are lovely for a special occasion.

Some of our patients have cut up tee shirts to a protector shape, over-locking the cut edges, and leaving the collar intact so that the cover pulls on like a normal top, but they still have easy access to the tube when they need to cough and wipe the secretions away.

People who need to wear a tie have generally not found this to be a problem. You can leave a couple of the shirt buttons undone and the tie will cover the opening.

When doing dirty and dusty work, obviously special care must be taken to ensure that a close fitting cover is worn. It should be easy to breathe through, but effectively protect the lungs from irritation dust, etc.

Suit Yourself!

It is important that you decide what you are most comfortable with as far as your tube is concerned. Every one of us has different tastes and needs in clothing. There is no reason why your cover should be out of style with your normal garb, and you can have different covers for different occasions and needs.

The Australian Laryngectomy Association

This association makes a very practical cotton cover with velcro fasteners, at present available only in a white singlet type material for around RM\$10.00 excluding packing and postage. They can be ordered by telephoning the Association. Your speech therapist will give you the number.

When you go home we recommend that you wear something over your tracheostomy tube. There are several reasons for this. The air we breathe is filtered through the nose. At the same time the air is warmed to body temperature and moistened on its way down the long tract to the lungs. After you have had a tracheostomy the air passage is shortened. The air breathed in through the tracheostomy tube in the neck reaches the lungs almost unchanged.

Why Bother?

Filter

With the use of some sort of covering you will be breathing through the material of the cover and this will filter out dust, grass clippings, powder or the saw dust from woodwork, etc.

Moisten

The same cover will retain some of the moisture from your lungs. Each time you breathe out with your protector off you are losing quite a lot of water vapour. This eventually leads to a dry airway and increased crusting in the top part of your windpipe.

Warm

This cover will also help warm the air you breathe, as it will retain some of your body warmth around the tracheostomy.

Some Ideas

There are many ideas that we can give you about very attractive practical covers. The basic guidelines are that the material should not be too light and flimsy or too heavy and thick.

A very fine silk, for example, would tend to be sucked into your tube. On the other hand, a thick knitted material with lint or loose fibres would also be unsuitable, as it would require extra effort to breathe and would make the inhaling of the material particles more likely.