



Suctioning

Skill Sheet

BLS	OT	AM	FR	EMR	AFA	MAFA
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Participants may not need to demonstrate skills for all age groups. The learning objectives for each course indicate the applicable content.

Steps

Ensure you are always wearing proper PPE before performing the skill.

1. If patient is responsive, explain the procedure.
2. Measure the distance from the patient's earlobe to the corner of the mouth to determine the depth of insertion.
3. Use the crossed-finger technique or tongue-jaw lift to open the patient's mouth.
4. Insert the catheter into the upper airway to the maximum depth measured earlier.
5. Provide rapid suction until the airway is clear.
6. After providing suction, give the patient supplemental oxygen.

Organizational/local protocol for _____ :

Infant Note

- A bulb syringe is used to provide suction for an infant. Deflate the bulb syringe before inserting it into the infant's airway.

Skill Notes

- If the patient has an OPA inserted, remove it first. If necessary, reinsert the OPA once the airway is clear.
- If a suction device malfunctions, roll the patient onto his or her side immediately and clear the airway with a finger sweep.
- If a patient has a tracheostomy or stoma, suction through the tube or hole. Do not insert the catheter more than 5 cm (2 in.) beyond the lower edge of the opening.