

# Emergency laryngectomy management

**Call for airway expert help**

**Look, listen & feel at the mouth and laryngectomy stoma**

A Mapleson C system (e.g. 'Waters circuit') may help assessment if available

Use **waveform capnography** whenever available: exhaled carbon dioxide indicates a patent or partially patent airway

No

Is the patient breathing?

Yes

Call Resuscitation Team  
**CPR if no pulse / signs of life**

**Apply high flow oxygen to laryngectomy stoma**  
If any doubt whether patient has a laryngectomy, apply oxygen to face also\*

Assess laryngectomy stoma patency

Most laryngectomy stomas will NOT have a tube in situ

Remove **stoma cover** (if present)  
Remove **inner tube** (if present)

Some inner tubes need re-inserting to connect to breathing circuits  
Do not remove a tracheoesophageal puncture (TEP) prosthesis

Can you pass a suction catheter?

Yes

**The laryngectomy stoma is patent**  
Perform tracheal suction  
Consider partial obstruction  
Ventilate via stoma if not breathing  
Continue ABCDE assessment

No

Deflate the **cuff** (if present)

**Look, listen & feel at the laryngectomy stoma or tube**  
Use waveform capnography or Mapleson C if available

Is the patient stable or improving?

Yes

Continue ABCDE assessment

No

**REMOVE THE TUBE FROM THE LARYNGECTOMY STOMA if present**

**Look, listen & feel at the laryngectomy stoma.** Ensure oxygen is re-applied to stoma  
Use waveform capnography or Mapleson C if available

Call Resuscitation Team  
**CPR if no pulse / signs of life**

Is the patient breathing?

Yes

Continue ABCDE assessment

Primary emergency oxygenation

**Laryngectomy stoma** ventilation via either  
Paediatric face mask applied to stoma  
LMA applied to stoma

Secondary emergency oxygenation

Attempt **intubation of laryngectomy stoma**  
Small tracheostomy tube / 6.0 cuffed ETT  
Consider Aintree catheter and fiberoptic 'scope / Bougie / Airway exchange catheter

\* Laryngectomy patients have an end stoma and **cannot be oxygenated via the mouth or nose**  
Applying oxygen to the face and stoma is the default emergency action for all patients with a tracheostomy