



ORAL AND RESPIRATORY SUCTION UNITS

Purpose: Healthy people can clear and manage their own secretions. Individuals that have a compromised swallowing or coughing mechanism need to have these secretions removed. Suction devices use controlled vacuum pressures and catheters to remove secretions. Suction units require clinical monitoring and follow-up with a home care nurse or respiratory therapist. Suction units require a doctor's order before use. The user must always follow and abide by the manufacturer's operating and safety instructions.

Types: There are two basic types of oral & respiratory suction units, stationary, or those that require electricity to operate, and portable or battery-powered models. Each has the same basic function. They each have adjustable suction pressures and the secretions collect in a separate container. These containers can be disposable or semi-permanent. Discount Drug Mart Professional Medical Equipment and Services maintains both types in inventory and will assist you in acquiring the unit that best meets your needs.

Use: Discount Drug Mart Professional Medical Equipment and Services will teach you how the suction unit operates. A nurse or respiratory therapist must teach actual suctioning techniques. The suction unit must be in the powered position. Always check the unit's filter for cleanliness. Make sure all supplies you are using with your suction unit are compatible for its use. If you are using a battery-powered unit, make sure you follow the manufacturer's recommendation for charging. Your physician or health care clinician should prescribe a suction pressure that will not damage the patient. Always wear gloves when suctioning.

Maintenance: Most units have filters that require periodic changing. Contact Discount Drug Mart Professional Medical Equipment and Services for your filter needs. The suction container must be emptied and cleaned daily. The contents may be dumped in your toilet and flushed. For cleaning see the procedure on the reverse side. Your suction unit should be kept free from dirt, grease, and oil. Use a mild soap and water on a rag or towel to wipe unit, never submerge unit. Always unplug unit before cleaning.

Accessories: The suction unit is only the source of the vacuum pressure. You must utilize suction tubing and oral or tracheal catheters. These items also need separate prescriptions and must be of proper size and type. There are many different types of tracheal catheters and must be specified as to type and size. Also suction kits are available.

.CLEANING

Your suction container should be cleaned daily with the below procedure. You may use commercially available bacterial-germicidal agents if you have a non-disposable suction canister. Always follow the manufacturers' recommended procedures.

1. Unplug the suction unit.
2. Remove suction container and lid before removing from machine.
3. Discard contents in toilet and flush. Be careful not to splash contents.
4. Wash in hot water and with dishwashing soap to remove any debris.
5. Rinse well with hot water and allow to dry.
6. Reassemble unit and plug back in and test all connections.

Additional Information: Your suction tubing can be cleaned in the same fashion. The suction catheters must be discarded when used. Suctioning can be either a clean or sterile procedure. Contact your home care nurse or respiratory therapist for more details about suctioning techniques.

This educational handout and all associated training has been reviewed and approved by:

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