

SUBJECT: BLUE DYE TESTING FOR RESPIRATORY PATIENTS WITH DYSPHAGIA	REFERENCE #8204
DEPARTMENT: REHABILITATION SERVICES	PAGE: 1 OF: 2
APPROVED BY:	EFFECTIVE: REVISED:

PURPOSE:

Evaluation of swallowing dysfunction on patients with compromised respiratory systems will be conducted in a manner that will ensure that nutritional and respiratory status is maintained or improved.

POLICY:

Speech-Language Pathology works in collaboration with Respiratory Services to determine if oral intake is safe for patients who have tracheostomy with or without respiratory/ventilator support.

PROCEDURE:

- Consultation with a Respiratory Therapist regarding the following:
 - Quantity and type of secretions
 - Duration of ventilator status
 - Duration of intubation
 - Patient’s tolerance of cuff deflation
 - Type and size of tracheostomy
- Conduct a bedside swallowing evaluation on physician’s orders:
 - Begin with oral peripheral examination.
 - “Paint” the patient’s tongue using a swab and blue food coloring.
 - Leave “Blue Dye Testing in Progress” note for Nursing or Rehabilitation Services staff to document date, time, color and amount of secretions.

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- Instruct Nursing or Rehabilitation Services staff to:
 - Swab the patient's tongue every shift for 24-72 hours
 - Note the color and site of secretions
 - Respiratory Therapist to document color of secretions during suctioning
- If a 24-hour blue dye test is completed without leakage of blue dye at the trach site or blue noted during suctioning by respiratory therapist, then attempt blue dye ice chips. If successful, give more blue ice chips. Respiratory Therapist should be present to monitor respiratory status, inflate trach cuff after the swallow and suction after the swallow.
- The patient may have blue dye water PRN for the next 24 hours (if all is going well).
- On the third day, attempt pureed foods (chocolate pudding or blue dyed foods are recommended, with close supervision by Respiratory Therapist).
- The patient may require modified barium swallow study (MBSS) to further evaluate integrity of the swallowing mechanism.