

# UC DAVIS HEALTH SYSTEM

## T. E. P.

### CARE OF THE TRACHEOSOPHAGEAL PUNCTURE

An opening (fistula) has been created between the trachea (windpipe) and the esophagus (food pipe) which will allow you to insert and use a voice prosthesis. The voice prosthesis is a one-way valve to introduce air into the esophagus without allowing fluids back into the trachea. After the surgical procedure, a red rubber catheter will stent or hold the fistula open until the area is healed and you are ready to learn to voice and to insert the prosthesis.

#### CLEANING YOUR STOMA AFTER THE FISTULA PROCEDURE

1. Continue to clean your stoma as you have been there should be no change
2. If the area becomes red or swollen call you physician or come to the clinic.
3. Continue with saline instillation to help with secretions.
4. Keep the catheter secure so it does not accidentally come out of the new speech fistula. The speech fistula will heal closed in a few hours if the catheter is not in place.

#### IF THE CATHETER COMES OUT

1. Re-insert the catheter yourself into the fistula located in the back of your stoma. Insert it to a distance of 8-10 inches.
2. Tie a knot in the end that hangs out and tape it securely to your neck.
3. If the catheter cannot be inserted, immediately call your physician or speech pathologist. Let them help you re-insert the catheter if possible
4. Take this information sheet with you to the ER

#### THE VOICE PROSTHESIS

1. Care and independent use of the voice prosthesis is the goal for your speech therapy
2. Your first lesson will teach you to remove and re-insert the red catheter.
3. While the catheter is out, you will learn to cover your stoma and voice through the speech fistula.
4. Once the fistula is healed you can be fitted for a prosthesis
5. You will **always** need to have either a speech prosthesis or a stent (the red rubber catheter) in the fistula to keep it open.

Make sure you have appointments with your speech pathologist to learn how to use the catheter and speech prosthesis.