



Surgical Airway

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RELATED INFORMATION	Royal College of Anaesthesia

Indications

Can't intubate, can't ventilate, patient >12yrs of age.

Equipment

1. Scalpel
2. tracheal dilators
3. 6.0 tracheostomy tube
4. 10ml syringe / tube tie
5. 15ch bougie
6. Tracheal hooks

Technique

- Identify the Cricothyroid membrane (fig 1)
- Aseptic technique
- Local anaesthesia or appropriate sedation if conscious
- Transverse incision through the skin and membrane (fig 2)
- Insert dilator (fig 3)
- Insert tracheostomy tube with central introducer remaining in place, directing down towards lungs
- Remove central introducer
- Inflate cuff and confirm position
- Secure in place

In cases of difficult or failed placement:

- Consider anchoring trachea with tracheal hooks and lifting anteriorly
- Pass bougie through incision and direct down towards the lungs
- Remove central introducer from tracheostomy tube
- Pass tracheostomy tube over bougie and introduce tube
- Remove bougie
- Inflate cuff and confirm position
- Secure in place

In all cases, confirm position by assessing ETCO₂, chest movement and auscultation

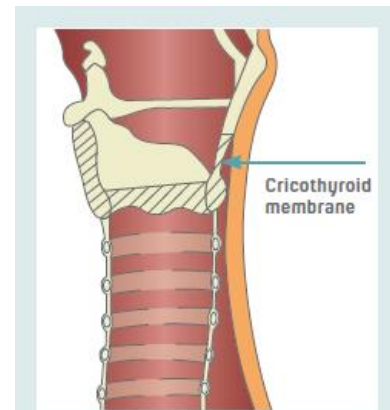


Fig 1. Cricothyroid membrane



Fig 2. Incision



Fig 3. Inserting dilators