

Remember to



Wash Hands!

About Pneumonia from a Ventilator:

Patients who need a machine to help them breathe can get a lung infection (pneumonia) if germs get into the breathing tube. This infection is also called VAP, for Ventilator Associated Pneumonia.

Risk Factors:

Use of ventilator for breathing, lung disease, age 65 and older



Use this Checklist to

Help Prevent Pneumonia from a Ventilator (VAP)

- ✓ **Ask about the sterile steps used to put the breathing tube into your loved one.**
- ✓ **Ask for a daily check of your loved one's ability to breathe without machine help.**
- ✓ **Use our angle guide to help make sure your loved one's back and head are always at least at a 30-degree angle by raising the mattress.**
 - If your loved one slumps, tell a nurse right away.
 - If you are able-bodied, ask if you can help position your loved one to sit up straighter.
 - Be on the lookout for bed sores on your loved one's tailbone and "sit bones." Follow the checklist to prevent bed sores.
- ✓ **Ask about medicines to help prevent your loved one from getting stomach ulcers** (sometimes caused from the breathing tube).
- ✓ **Ask about care for your loved one's teeth, gums and tongue every four hours** to kill germs that could go from mouth to lungs. Make sure these are used every time:
 - A toothbrush with soft bristles and 1.5% peroxide toothpaste
 - A vacuum tool to pull germs and waste from the mouth
 - A chlorhexidine rinse (*It tastes bad — but it works!*)

Note: *Sometimes patients on ventilators have their hands bound to keep them from pulling out the tubes by accident. This may be scary for your loved one, and may even cause a panic attack. Get a nurse to help ease your loved one's fears.*

Get a Nurse if:

You see signs of (or your loved one tells you about):

- **Fever, chills, shivering, body aches, headaches, confusion**
- **White patches or sores in your loved one's mouth or on the lips**
- **Cough with phlegm (can be yellow or green)**
- **Increasing need for suctioning**
- **Need for higher settings on the breathing machine**

You see:

- **The tube come loose**
- **A pool of water inside the tube (If in doubt, call a nurse.)**

Notes:



Remember,
**It's OK to
Speak Up**