Queensland Paediatric Emergency Care

Nursing Skill Sheets

Oropharyngeal Airway

Oropharyngeal airways (OPA) are used for short term airway management in the unconscious paediatric patient.

1 GATHER EQUIPMENT

Gather equipment pictured below

GOWN
FACE SHIELD
TONGUE DEPRESSOR
GLOVES
OROPHARYNGEAL AIRWAY

2 PREPARE

Attend to hand hygiene and don PPE

3 PROCEDURE

Position the child appropriately to access the nose

4

Measure for the correct size OPA from the central incisors to the angle of the jaw.

5

Use a tongue depressor to help move the tongue out of the way.

6

Insert the OPA with the concave surface to the tongue under direct vision. If the patient gags remove the OPA as the patient is not tolerating it and this increases the risk of vomiting.

7

Document the size of the OPA inserted and reassess its effectiveness. If the patient had an oxygen mask on prior to procedure then re-apply oxygen as required.

> ### ALERT
> An OPA of the incorrect size may inadvertently cause an airway obstruction.
>
> Seek prompt senior nursing/medical advice for assistance in paediatric airway management.

Tips in children

- Do not twist, turn or invert the OPA in an infant or child as this can damage their soft palate

For further information:

Clinical Assessment of the Paediatric Patient – Rapid Assessment / Primary and Secondary Survey / Vital Signs (QH only)

Video:

Core Oropharyngeal Airway Insertion

References:

This Queensland Paediatric Emergency Nursing Skill Sheet was developed by the Emergency Care of Children working group (funded by the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel) with the help of the following resources:

Group., A.P.L.S., Advanced Paediatric Life Support. 5th ed. 2011, London: Wiley-Blackwell.
15. Kliegman, R., Stanton, B., Geme, J., Schor, N. & Behrman, R., Nelsons Textbook of Pediatrics. 20th ed. 2016, Philadelphia: Saunders Elsevier.

Queensland Health State wide ED Nurse Educator Committee, Pearson, N., Cole, T., & Carney, S. (Eds.). (2016). Unit 5 Respiratory. In Queensland Health: Transition Support Program - Emergency. Module 3 - Paediatric Care in the Emergency Department (4th ed., pp. 65–67). State of Queensland (Queensland Health).

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- Providing care within the context of locally available resources, expertise, and scope of practice.
- Supporting consumer rights and informed decision making in partnership with healthcare practitioners including the right to decline intervention or ongoing management.

- Advising consumers of their choices in an environment that is culturally appropriate and which enables comfortable and confidential discussion. This includes the use of interpreter services where necessary.
- Ensuring informed consent is obtained prior to delivering care.
- Meeting all legislative requirements and professional standards.
- Applying standard precautions, and additional precautions as necessary, when delivering care.
- Documenting all care in accordance with mandatory and local requirements.

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