

Breathe, Baby Breathe:

Developmental Interventions for Infants with Tracheostomy Tubes

Holly Schifsky, OTR/L, CNT, NTMTC, CBIS



Faculty

Holly Schifsky has worked in pediatrics for the past 28 years with the past 17 years in a level IV NICU. She is a Certified Neonatal Therapist, Certified Neonatal Touch and Massage Therapist, Certified Brain Injury therapist, a member of National Association of Neonatal Therapists, and has completed 6-month mentorship in infant/child NDT. She has worked within the NICU and NICU follow-up clinic to maximize patient and family outcomes for the most complex premature and medically-fragile term infants. Holly received her BS in OT from the University of North Dakota. She is a faculty member for the Neonatal Touch and Massage certification; and Manuel Edema Mobilization training. She is the recipient of the National Association of Neonatal Therapists Clinical Excellence award in 2018, due to her clinical expertise and dedication to advancing the therapeutic interventions for NICU infants with cardiopulmonary conditions.

Disclosure - Financial: Holly Schifsky receives an honorarium from ERI.
Non-Financial: She has no non-financial relationships to disclose.

About this Live Webinar

Advance your assessment, treatment, and outcomes for infants requiring a tracheostomy tube. Medical co-morbidities associated with infants requiring a tracheostomy tube, implications of the tracheostomy tube on oral feeding/motor development, integrating physical rehabilitation treatments and respiratory therapy interventions to maximize infant outcomes with oral feeding, motor development, and daily activities related to play skills will be discussed. Expand your practice by integrating evidence into your clinical decision-making including reading/interpreting vent settings during interventions for objective assessments of infants that are intubated or have tracheostomy tubes. Expanded lecture/lab section devoted to infants with tracheostomy tubes include oral motor, feeding interventions, postural control, manual cough facilitation, positioning/handling, integrating use of a one-way valve into treatment, weaning respiratory support, and durable medical equipment recommendations for infant/family in preparation for home discharge. This course will focus on infants up to 12 months corrected gestational age with information applicable to clinicians working in the NICU, PICU, transitional pediatric care, in-home therapy, early intervention, and outpatient clinics.

Objectives

- Differentiate medical pathology from normal development for infants requiring a tracheostomy tube
- Determine how the placement of a tracheostomy tube influences the development of oral feeding and postural control skills
- Identify three risk factors for feeding dysfunction associated with oral feeding an infant with a tracheostomy
- Apply at least two feeding strategies for infants requiring a tracheostomy tube to improve sensory and motor performance with oral feeding
- Apply at least two postural control strategies for infants with a tracheostomy tube to improve their ability to utilize vocal cord movement to enhance their cough, phonation, and gross motor movement
- Choose an individualized care plan for an infant using the provided case study with tracheostomy tubes for improved outcomes with oral feeding, cough facilitation, motor control, and phonation

Audience

This course is recommended for OTs, PTs and SLPs in the NICU, PICU, transitional pediatric care, in-home therapy, early intervention, and outpatient clinic settings.

Help your patients achieve better outcomes.

Schedule – Day 1 9:40 am to 7:30 pm EST (US)

9:40-10:00 Webinar Registration/Zoom Course Opens

10:00-10:30 Updates in Evidence: Includes Resources and References for Individualized Learning

10:30-12:00 Tracheostomy Tubes

- Information on types of infants that require tracheostomy tube placement
 - Pulmonary: bronchopulmonary dysplasia
 - Cranial Facial: airway anomalies
 - Neuromuscular: myotonic dystrophy, hypotonia
 - Neurological: brain injury or malformation
 - Genetic conditions: airway compromise, musculoskeletal conditions
- Equipment
 - Tracheostomy tubes: cuffed verse cuffless trach
 - Ventilators and vent settings
 - Weaning from vent, trach mask

12:00-12:15 Break

12:15-1:15 Lecture and **LAB**: Oral Motor Interventions and Pre-feeding Assessment

- Oral motor interventions
- Secretion management
- Monitoring vent settings
- Consideration of trach cuff inflation/deflation

1:15-2:15 Lecture and **LAB**: Oral Feeding Interventions

- Implications of vent settings on oral feeding skills
- Critical reason for assessing the Oral, Pharyngeal and Esophageal phase of oral feeding
- Bottle selection: sensory and motor considerations
- Monitoring for aerophagia, techniques for gastric decompression

2:15-2:45 Lunch

2:45-3:30 Dysphagia Risk

- Integration of standardized swallow assessment: video fluoroscopy swallow study
- Treatment options: altered oral feeding: thickened feeding, advancing to solids

3:30-4:00 Lecture Postural Control Development for Infants with Tracheostomy Tubes: Assessment and Discussion

4:00-4:15 Break

4:15-6:00 **LAB** Postural Control Development for Infants with Tracheostomy Tube

- Assessment of ribcage development and implications of artificial airway
- Discussion of influence of pulmonary, GI, and musculoskeletal development for older infants
- Manual cough facilitation: vibration and percussion
- Rolling facilitation
- Pelvic Floor activation with weight bearing
- Spinal extension facilitation
- Managing rib flares for infants with inverted diaphragm, complex BPD
- Scapular mobilization for ribcage elongation
- Facilitation of ribcage development
- Diaphragm activation

6:00 – 6:30 Advancing Infant to Use of a One-way Valve

6:30-7:00 Additional Considerations

- Self-care: bathing, dressing
- Community mobility: equipment considerations
- Family training
- Developmental play tasks for home program
- Adjunct interventions
- Goal writing to support tracheostomy tube decannulation (if applicable to infant)

7:00-7:30 Case Study

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This course meets the criteria for 8.5 contact hours (0.85 CEUs) Intermediate Level.



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This course can be used toward your NBCOT renewal requirements. Approved provider of the FL Board of Occupational Therapy-CE Broker. This course meets the approval of the TX Board of OT Examiners.



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This course meets the criteria for 8.5 hours that can be applied toward the Neonatal Therapy National Certification.

Live Webinar Date and Time

May 8, 2026

9:40 am EST • 8:40 am CST • 7:40 am MST • 6:40 am PST (US)

Zoom log-in instructions and course materials will be emailed/added to your ERI account 5-7 days prior to the first date of the webinar.



\$249 fee. **LIMITED ENROLLMENT.** Cancellation will be accepted until 14 days prior to the start date of the course, minus a \$75 Administration Fee. There will be NO REFUNDS after this 14 day deadline. We encourage you to register online!

LIVE WEBINAR: “Breathe, Baby Breathe: Developmental Interventions for Infants with Tracheostomy Tubes”

Holly Schiffksy, OTR/L, CNT, NTMTC, CBIS

☐ May 8, 2026

Course Registration Form

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