
You and Your Child

- Trust your parental instincts. Take cues from your child. You do know your child best and what is best for your child.
- Allow your child to be a child first. It is easy to let the medical care and treatments take over your daily lives. Make a point to schedule fun time with your child.
- Appreciate the small things your child does. It does wonders for you, as a parent, to enjoy the smaller, less obvious accomplishments in life.
- As hard as it can be, carve out one-on-one time for your other children.
- Schedule relaxation time for yourself and also relaxation time with your spouse, partner, and/or friends.
- When other children approach your child with questions about his trach, embrace them and encourage the children to ask the questions. Adults are typically nervous and may react by drawing them away. Let the adults learn from their children. Help them learn about trachs and children with trachs and how it is just a different way of breathing. We are all more similar than different.
- Embrace your baby, not only emotionally but physically. When a child is in the NICU and all hooked up to tubes and wires, it can be frightening to hold your baby. It is important to hold them close to you and skin to skin as much as possible. Studies have shown that the body's stress level decreases, heart rate regulates, and respiratory status improves, all of which can help improve the health and recovery time of a baby/child.
- If your child needs to stay in the hospital for a long time, it could be helpful for the nurses to have some visible notes next to your child's bed that has a list of likes and dislikes, specific daily wishes you would like nurses to do for your child, cues of expression and what they mean if your child is nonverbal or hard to understand.
- If your child needs puréed foods, work with a nutritionist to have a good blend of nutrients and calories.
- Do not microwave any liquids or food if at all possible. It destroys some nutritional content and if plastic is used, some of the plastic chemicals stick to your food or liquid.
- Bring a small music player if hospital allows and play classical music or your child's favorite tunes. Music is great for brain development and can be very soothing or up-lifting.
- Consider alternative medicines and treatments. For example, homeopathic medicine, all natural products, essential oils, massage, acupuncture, reiki, shiatsu, cranial sacral therapy, etc.
- Remember to read, sing, play, give hugs and kisses and massages to your child. It's amazing what the human body knows and feels.
- Studies have shown if you massage the area of the body that will get a shot or needle, the stress level and pain will decrease.
- Use less antibacterial gel and more hand washing.