

Cricothyroidotomy

Effective: 03/01/2022

Supersedes:
N/A

Approved Provider: Paramedic

Reference Protocols: [Anaphylaxis](#), [Breathing Difficulty](#), [General Trauma](#)

Indications

- Inability to open and maintain the airway by any other less invasive means

Contraindications

- Less than 10 years old (refer to [Needle Cricothyroidotomy](#))
- Unable to locate landmarks

Precautions

- Hemorrhage may be severe if the thyroid, Arteries, or veins are perforated or lacerated

Procedure (Fig. 1, 2, & 3)

- Gather supplies as below or use kit (Fig. 3)
 1. Scalpel
 2. 5.5 or 6.0 cuffed ET tube
 3. Sterile gauze sponges
 4. Betadine prep
 5. Hemostats
- Locate the cricothyroid membrane
- Prepare the skin
- Scrub with alcohol prep as time permits
- Incise the skin and cricothyroid membrane
- Make vertical cut through the skin (Fig. 1)
- Spread the skin and locate the cricothyroid membrane (Fig. 2)
- Make horizontal cut through the cricothyroid membrane
- Enlarge and maintain opening
- Insert the largest cuffed ET tube possible
- Inflate ET tube cuff
- DO NOT LET GO OF THE ET TUBE
- Ventilate patient with BVM and 100% O₂
- Confirm placement as per protocol
- Cover incision with sterile dressing and secure tube

Fig. 1



Fig. 2

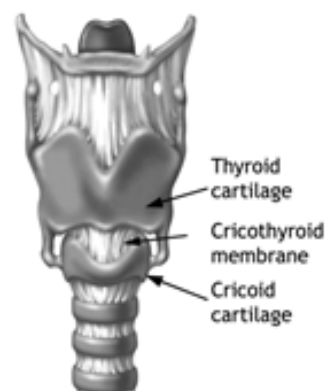


Fig. 3



Complications

- Bleeding
- Massive subcutaneous and/or mediastinal emphysema
- Esophageal injury
- Tension pneumothorax

Documentation

- Indications for procedure
- Description of procedure
- Equipment used
- Response to procedure