AIDAA 2016 Guidelines for the Management of Unanticipated Difficult Tracheal Intubation in Adults

CALL FOR HELP

STEP 1: Laryngoscopy and tracheal intubation

Unable to intubate during first attempt at direct/video laryngoscopy

- Continue nasal oxygen using O_2 flow at 15 L/min
- Maximum two more attempts (repeat attempts only if SpO_2 ≥95%)
- Mask ventilation between attempts
- Optimise position, use external laryngeal manipulation, release cricoid pressure, use bougie / stylet if required
- Consider changing device/ technique/ operator between attempts
- Maintain depth of anaesthesia

Succeed → Confirm tracheal intubation using capnography

Failed Intubation → Resume Mask Ventilation with 100% O_2

STEP 2: Insert SAD to maintain oxygenation

- Continue nasal oxygen using O_2 flow at 15 L/min
- Preferably use second generation SAD
- Maximum two attempts (only if SpO_2 ≥ 95%)
- Mask ventilation between attempts
- Consider changing size or type of SAD
- Maintain depth of anaesthesia

Succeed → **Consider one of the following options :**

1. Wake up the patient
2. Continue anaesthesia using SAD if considered safe
3. Intubate through the SAD using a FOB only, provided expertise is available
4. Tracheostomy

Failed Ventilation through SAD

STEP 3: Rescue face mask ventilation

- Continue nasal oxygen using O_2 flow at 15 L/min
- Ensure neuromuscular blockade
- Final attempt at face mask ventilation using optimal technique and adjuncts

Succeed → Wake up the patient

Complete Ventilation Failure → CALL FOR ADDITIONAL HELP

STEP 4 : Emergency cricothyroidotomy

- Continue nasal oxygen using O_2 flow at 15 L/min and efforts at rescue face mask ventilation
- Perform one of the following techniques
  - Surgical cricothyroidotomy
  - Wide bore cannula cricothyroidotomy
  - Needle cricothyroidotomy (use pressure regulated jet ventilation and attempt to keep the upper airway patent)

Post- procedure plan

1. Further airway management plan
2. Treat airway oedema if suspected
3. Monitor for complications
4. Counseling and documentation

This flow chart should be used in conjunction with the text

FOB = Fibreoptic bronchoscope
SAD = Supraglottic airway device
O_2= Oxygen
SpO_2 = Oxygen saturation

Myatra SN, Shah A, Kundra P, Patwa A, Ramkumar V, Divatia JV, Raveendra US, Shetty SR, Ahmed SM, Doctor JR, Pawar DK, Ramesh S, Das S, Garg R. All India Difficult Airway Association 2016 guidelines for the management of unanticipated difficult tracheal intubation in adults.
Indian J Anaesth 2016;60:885-98. http://www.ijaweb.org/text.asp?2016/60/12/885/195481