

Breathing Through a Stoma

Your nose and upper airway condition the air you breathe by providing heat and humidity. Because a laryngectomy reroutes your airway intake to the stoma (or tracheostoma) and bypasses the nose, a different method of conditioning is needed. Without conditioning, the cool, dry air you breathe in often causes unpleasant side effects such as increased mucus production and coughing, sleeplessness and other social problems.



Breathing through a Provox® HME

The Heat and Moisture Exchanger (HME) is placed in front of your stoma and is sometimes called your artificial nose. The specially treated foam inside the HME cassette partially replaces the function of your nose. To get the most out of using the HME, it is important to use it all the time, day and night (24/7), just like your nose.



Benefits of using an HME

1. Health of your airway: Research has shown that wearing an HME all the time, 24 hours a day, often reduces coughing and sputum production.
2. Hygiene: Wearing an HME often reduces the need to clean the stoma and avoids direct finger contact with the stoma.
3. Appearance: Wearing an HME covers the stoma and creates a more normal appearance.
4. Voice: Users of a voice prosthesis often report a better sound of their voice and find it easier to occlude the stoma.
5. Quality of Life: Research has shown that people with a laryngectomy who use an HME continuously report better sleep and less fatigue.

