

Emergency Action Card

Increased airway pressure

State out loud:

"The patient has developed high airway pressures"

Action:

If critical features

Complete absence of chest movements?

Rapidly worsening hypoxia?

Immediately convert to manual ventilations via bag & 100% oxygen. Connect directly to the tracheal tube - **do not use** catheter mount or HME filter. Confirm whether the chest is rising and falling and get a manual 'feel' for the airway pressure

Check:

1 Adequate oxygen delivery

- Ensure ventilator is set to 100% oxygen. Confirm appropriate pressure alarm settings.
- Perform a visual inspection of entire breathing system from ventilator to endotracheal tube for blockages, kinking etc.

2 Airway

- Check position of endotracheal tube and exclude endobronchial migration
- Check capnograph presence and shape of the wave
- Consider passing a tracheal suction catheter to confirm tube patency and to clear secretions

3 Breathing

- Check chest movement symmetry and co-ordination with ventilator. Exclude patient pathology

Potential causes

- Kinking or intrinsic blockage within the breathing circuit, HME or endotracheal tube
- Endobronchial migration
- Inadequate neuromuscular blockade
- Bronchospasm/Anaphylaxis
- Secretions/Plugging/Pulmonary oedema/Pulmonary contusions/Foreign body
- Pneumothorax