**Tracheostomy**

- **Indications**: more comfortable, no need for muscle relaxants & sedatives
- **Advantages**: return of GIT function,
  - easier clearance of secretions,
  - speech possible if tube inflated,
  - lower risk of airway problems & prolonged ventilation

- **Indications**:
  - actual (impending airway obstruction)
  - known difficult intubation
  - need for prolonged IPPV
  - aid to weaning
  - self airway maintenance on a long-term basis (e.g., severe brain injury, bulbar palsy)

- **Complications**:

  **EARLY**
  - bleeding (e.g., jugular vein)
  - pneumomediastinum
  - displaced tube
  - surgical emphysema
  - mucus plug
  - infection

  **LATE**
  - tracheal stenosis
  - tracheo-esophageal fistula
  - scar
  - late hemorrhage