

THE AIRWAY COMPANY LAUNCHES REVOLUTIONARY SPEAKING VALVE FOR TRACHEOSTOMY PATIENTS

New Shikani Speaking Valve helps patients communicate clearly while minimizing the effort required for breathing.

BALTIMORE, MD (August 30, 2013) – The Airway Company, an emerging provider of innovative tracheostomy products, announces the launch of its second generation Shikani Speaking Valve (SSV) which is the first valve to give tracheostomy patients complete control over how airflow is directed into the upper airway, thus making the use of a speaking valve more comfortable.

“The Airway Company is setting new standards for tracheostomy patients with the groundbreaking design of the Shikani Speaking Valve,” said Dr. Alan Shikani, chairman and chief medical officer of Shikani Medical, LLC, inventor of the Shikani Speaking Valve. “We developed this valve in an effort to minimize the impact on airflow through the tracheostomy tube, while enabling patients to achieve clear, strong speech, ultimately improving their overall quality of life.”

The valve features a flexible, two-way design that allows patients to choose how airflow is directed into the upper airway. When using the valve in the “bias closed” position, every breath is directed into the upper airway. While some tracheostomy patients can tolerate this, other patients cannot. Using the valve in the “bias open” position allows patients to breath through the tracheostomy tube as if there was no valve in place until they go to voice. For patients who can’t traditionally tolerate a speaking valve, using the valve in the “bias open” position is ideal. Patients can also transition from the “bias open” position to the “bias closed” position as they adapt to the process of using the SSV.

“There are a number of tracheostomy patients who cannot tolerate the use of a traditional speaking valve, especially patients with a severely compromised respiratory status or patients who have a partial airway obstruction,” said Shannon Weinheimer, staff speech language pathologist for The Airway Company, “The Shikani Speaking Valve not only allows these patients to finally use a speaking valve, but it also allows them to use a valve earlier in the recovery period. The valve is also ideal for children where a tracheostomy can ultimately impact the development of normal language skills.”

The Shikani Speaking Valve also boasts a lightweight ball design that offers lower resistance during inhalation, enabling patients to breathe easily.

The Shikani Speaking Valve can also be utilized in conjunction with the Shikani Heat Moisture Exchanger (HME), thus allowing patients to receive the benefits of speech *and* increased pulmonary health.

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About The Airway Company

The Airway Company is a division of Shikani Medical, LLC. Established in 2010, The Airway Company is devoted to developing innovative products for tracheostomy

patients. For more information about The Airway Company's complete line of products, visit www.TheAirwayCompany.com or contact press@theairwaycompany.com