



WOUND DRAIN CARE



A wound drain is placed to remove excess fluid that builds up under skin flaps or in empty spaces created by the surgery.
You will have to care for the drain at home for one or two weeks.

CARING FOR THE DRAIN

- Keep the drain clean with routine hygiene.
- Remove outer dressing 24hrs post op.
- Strip/milk the tubing daily to prevent clots from blocking the tube.
- If you experience leaking/oozing around the tubing - pack it with gauze.

STRIPPING/MILKING:

- To do this, hold the tubing between your thumb and index finger at a point where the tubing exits the skin. Squeeze your fingers together to pinch off the tubing.
- Position the fingers of the other hand in the same way just below the pinched-off tubing.
- While holding the first two fingers in place to prevent pulling on your skin, slide the bottom two fingers down the tubing.
- This pushes any clots into the assembly bulb.
- You might need to do this quite a few points down the tubing.
- Repeat this two to three times a day to keep the tubing clear.

EMPTYING DRAIN:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before you start.
- Hold the bulb in an upright position with one hand and take the cap off with the other.
- With the bulb in one hand and the small measuring cup in the other, turn the bulb over and gently squeeze into the cup, OR if you did not receive a cup, use the measurement on the bulb itself.

- Once you have a measurement, record it on your drainage chart.
- Measure drainage in milliliters.
- Discard the drainage into the toilet and flush.
- Rinse the cup so it is clean and ready to use the next time.
- Wash your hands.
- Re-pin your drain to your clothing; it should be lower than your incision.
- Be sure to bring your drainage chart to your post op visit.

PLEASE CALL YOUR DOCTOR WHEN:

- You develop a temperature over 37.5 °C.
- Your drainage increases or stops suddenly, and stripping/milking the tube does not resume drainage.
- Your drain stitch breaks down.
- The fluid in your drain becomes bright red.
- Skin redness around the drain should be 1/2cm around - if the redness increases please call your doctor.

REFERENCE:

Wound care discharge instructions [Internet]. Available at https://patienteducationconnect.com/files/Wound_Care.pdf (Accessed on September 16, 2015).

Barbara Bedell, et el 2004. The Wound Care Self-Care Guide, [Internet]. Available at https://www.vnsny.org/system/assets/0000/0481/Wound_PatientCareGuide.original.pdf?1225313670 (Accessed on September 16, 2025).

DRAINAGE CHART: