

Drain Care After Surgery

Your physician has placed one or more drains (soft plastic tubes) in the area of your incision. They are used to prevent fluid accumulation that may not allow the surgical wound to heal properly otherwise. Each drain is attached to a suction bulb. The amount of fluid that collects will gradually decrease, and the fluid color will often change from red to reddish yellow, then yellow.

Until each tube is removed, you will need to empty the suction bulb 2-3 times per day, recording the amount each time in cc's or mls (milliliters). A cup will be provided to you after your surgery to help with measuring.

1. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
2. Leaving the bulb connected to the drainage tubing, left the stopper allowing air to enter the bulb.
3. Using the calibrations on the side of the bulb, or by turning the bulb upside down and draining the fluid into the cup provided, approximate the amount of draining in cc's or mls (milliliters). You may dispose of the fluid into the toilet and flush.
4. Turn the bulb right side up, squeeze and hold the bulb while replacing the stopper. The bulb should be collapsed for the drain to function properly.
5. Record the date, amount, and color of the fluid drained.

See example below:

Aug 23		R breast	24 h total	L breast	24 h total	color
	10 am	35 mls		40 mls		Red
	10 pm	55 mls	90 mls	60 mls	100 mls	Red
Aug 24	9 am	25 mls		40 mls		Lt red
	9 pm	35 mls	60 mls	35 mls	75 mls	Lt red

NOTE: Please do not wash or rinse out the collection bulb, as the handling of the bulb in this manner may introduce other unwanted organisms. It is ok to swab the sprout of the drain with an alcohol swab before replacing the stopper cap.

If you notice any stringy clots in the tubing that prevent fluid from flowing, you may strip or "milk" the tubing toward the collection bulb to get these moving.

If you have any questions regarding drain care, please do not hesitate to call our office: 503-467-4761.

Instructions given by: _____

Date: _____

Patient Released to: _____

