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Drain Care Instructions

A drain was (or might be) placed during your operation. The purpose of the drain is to remove fluid from the surgical site. The drain is held in place by a stitch and covered with a bandage. The drain will be removed when it is no longer needed.

Showering is prohibited until the drain is removed unless otherwise specified.

Please be careful not to tug or pull on the drain tube as this will cause discomfort and can potentially dislodge the drain. Secure the tube and bulb inside your clothing with a safety pin to help keep it from being pulled out by accident.

Empty the drain and record the output **twice** a day at the same time- for example 8 am and 8pm or more often if needed.. Accurately reporting your output will help to decide when the drain is ready to be removed.

Instructions for emptying the drain:

- Open the plug on the bulb.
- Drain fluid into a measuring cup
- Record the amount of fluid
- Squeeze the bulb to empty the air
- Close the plug on the bulb with it collapsed

The dressing where the drain enters the skin will need to be changed daily.

Instructions for changing the dressing:

- Wash your hands
- Remove the old bandage
- Wash your hands again
- Clean the skin around the drain tube with Betadine or warm soapy water
- Put a new bandage over the drain tube site and hold in place with tape

You may be instructed to “strip” the drain tube which helps keep clots from blocking the tube. **DO NOT** strip the drain tube unless you are specifically instructed to do so.

Instructions for stripping the tube

- Hold the tubing where it exits the skin with one hand.
- Pinch the tubing with the thumb and index finger of your other hand
- Slowly and firmly pull your thumb and first finger down the tubing. If the pulling hurts or feels like the drain is coming out of the skin, STOP immediately and begin again more gently.

Contact the office immediately if:

- New or increased pain around the drain tube
- Redness, swelling or warmth around the incision or tube
- Drainage that is foul smelling
- Fever over 101.5° F
- Fluid leaking around the tube
- Tube falls out
- Any concerns