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TOTONCHI
PLASTIC SURGERY

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR DRAIN

What is a drain and why do I have one?

During your surgery, tissue layers were separated from each other creating a space that could possibly fill with fluid. For normal healing to occur, the tissues on the sides of this space must be in contact with each other. Tissue fluid (called serum) and blood can build up in this space, preventing the tissue layers from normally healing together. Your drain is a device that safely removes this fluid from the space. As a surgical site heals, the size of this space gets smaller, and the amount of fluid produced in the wound decreases. Eventually, the space closes completely and there is no fluid accumulation. The entire process may take only a few days or up to several weeks. Your drain is removed when your surgeon feels that the amount fluid collected over 24 hours is low enough to remove the device. That is why it is important for you to accurately record the drain amounts.

What are the drain parts?

Drains have 3 parts: the drain, the drain tube, and the drain bulb. The drain is a specially coated white tube that collects the fluid from your surgical site. You cannot see this part. The drain tube connects the drain to the drain bulb. This clear plastic tube carries the fluid from the drain to the bulb. The drain tube is normally anchored to your skin with a stitch near the incision. The drain bulb is a device that creates a vacuum, pulling the drain fluid into it. This is the part that you will need to empty (instructions are in this brochure).

Can I take a shower with a drain?

Your surgeon will tell you if you may shower. When you do take a shower with a drain in place, you should tape the drain bulb to your skin to prevent pulling on the drain tube. Gently wash around the area where the drain tube enters your skin. Be sure the drain site is dry prior to covering with a dressing or your clothes.

How often should I empty the drain?

In general, you should empty the drain bulbs 3 times every 24 hours or whenever the drain bulb is half full. Sometimes the bulb may need to be emptied 4 or more times a day. It may only need to be emptied once a day. Always record the amount of drainage.

How will I know if I am having a problem with a drain?

Problems are infrequent but there are signs of drains not functioning properly:

Drain bulb will not stay collapsed after it is emptied. This means that there is air leaking into the system. Be sure that the stopper is properly replaced after emptying the bulb. Other areas to check are the drain tube for cracks and the drain site itself may be leaking air.

Leaking fluid at the drain site and no fluid collecting in the bulb This indicates that the drain system is clogged.

The white drain is pulling out of the drain site Never try to push the drain back in.

The skin around the drain is red, swollen and tender This may be a drain site infection.

If you have any of these problems or other questions, please call the office at 440-461-7999

HOW TO EMPTY YOUR DRAIN

Note: You may want to proceed with the following steps in your bathroom with the sink and toilet nearby.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.

2. Hold the drain bulb upright and remove the stopper from the stem. The bulb will expand to an egg shape. (see Figure 1)

3. Hold the bulb over the measuring cup provided to
you. Turn the bulb over with the stem over the cup.
Gently squeeze the bulb to empty the drain fluid into the cup. (see Figure 2)

4. After emptying the drain, squeeze all of the air out of the bulb by grasping the bulb between your thumb and fingers. (see Figure 3)

5. Continue to squeeze the bulb. With the bulb completely empty of air, replace the stopper into the
drain stem (Figure 4). When you release your grip on the bulb, it will stay collapsed.

6. Secure the drain bulb back to your clothing.

7. Look at the amount of fluid that was emptied into
the cup and write down that amount on the record sheet provided. Be sure to also write down the date
and time that the drain was emptied.

8. Pour the fluid from the cup into the toilet or sink
and flush the toilet or rinse the sink.

9. Repeat steps 2 to 8 for each drain if you have more than one drain.

10. Rinse out your cup(s) and wash your hands

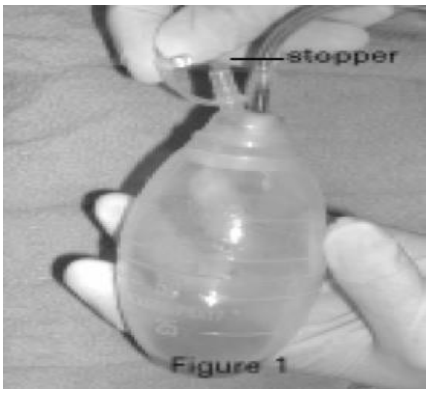
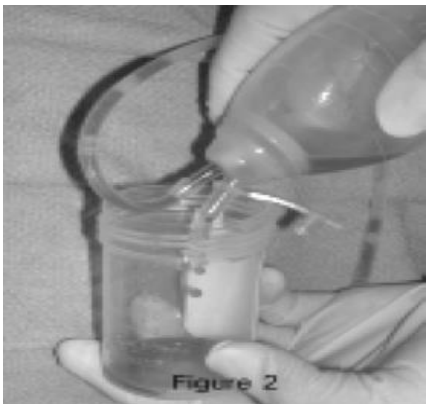
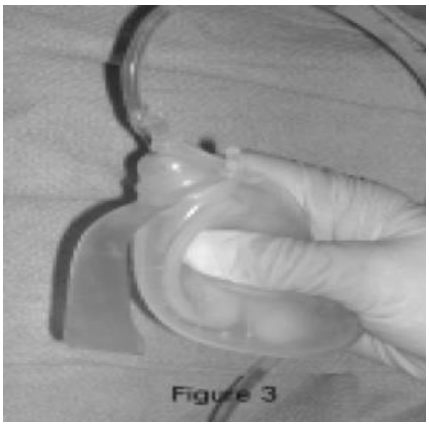


Figure 1


Figure 2


Figure 3

RECORD YOUR DRAIN AMOUNTS HERE

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TIPS

* If you have more than one drain, record each drain’s amount in the same column each time.
* Write down the date and time prior to starting the process of emptying the drains.
* Empty drains at the same times each day.