

Bonnie J. Baldwin, M.D.
Aesthetic and Reconstructive Plastic Surgery

Office (713) 791-1975
Fax (713) 796-2583

Wound Care for Your Drain

You will need to care for the skin at your drain site **daily**. **Do not** take a shower until the drains are removed. You will cover the drain site with antibiotic ointment once a day until the drain is removed.

It is important this area remains clean and that you look for any signs of infection. This can be done at the time you clean the drain site and care for the suture line. The following information will help you care for your drains and drain sites at home.

Supplies You Will Need

May be obtained at any drug store

- Tape (paper or dressing tape)
- Antibacterial ointment
- Cotton swabs
- Gauze pads, 2 inch by 2 inch
- Hydrogen peroxide

Procedure

1. Gather all your supplies in a clean, dry area.
2. Remove and throw away your soiled dressing.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water.
4. Use a cotton swab or Q-tip, dipped in hydrogen peroxide to clean around the drain site. Start where the drain tube enters the skin. Clean in a circular motion moving outward, away from the drain site. Use a new swab with each cleaning. **Do not** use the same cotton swab twice.
5. When cleaning, lift the drain tubing as needed to clean under it. Make sure that all drainage, dried blood, or crust is removed with each cleaning.
6. The drain is secured to the skin with a stitch. Make sure the stitch remains attached to the skin. If the stitch becomes loose, the tube may come out. Notify our office if the stitch is not in place.
7. Apply antibacterial ointment generously around entry site of skin.

8. Using two gauze pads cover the drain tube site. Fold one pad in half. With the folded edge **up**, place it **under** the tube(s). Fold the other pad in half, with the folded edge **down** and place it **over** the tube(s).
9. Tape the dressing in place. A dressing should remain over the tube insertion site. Replace it when it becomes soiled.
10. Below the dressing you may tape the drain tube securely to the skin to prevent it from being dislodged.
11. Wash your hands again when you have completed these steps.
12. Following removal of the drain, continue to clean the area with soap and water. Apply a small amount of antibiotic ointment to the drain site and cover with a band-aid until completely healed.

Special Instructions

Notify your doctor or nurse if:

- ❖ Your temperature is higher than 101°F (38°C).
- ❖ The drain site becomes red or swollen or has foul smelling drainage.
- ❖ The stitch at the drain site is not in place.

Emptying the Drains

The drains will be emptied and measured twice daily, once in the morning and again in the evening. A drain output sheet will be provided for you to record the time and amount of output. For example, at 9:00 A.M open each bulb and, using the markings on the bulb (which are 25, 50, 75, and 100), record the amount of output from each bulb separately. At 9:00 P.M. you will repeat this process.

To calculate the total output for a 24-hour period you will add the A.M. and P.M. amounts together. Each drain output amount is totaled separately. Drains are removed when they are individually draining less than 30cc in a 24-hour period.

Do not shower until the drains are removed. Until the drains are removed only sponge baths are permitted.