



POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS – Suction Drain

HOW TO CARE FOR A SUCTION DRAIN

A suction drain is a plastic tube that exits from the surgery site and is connected to a vacuum bulb. Its purpose is remove fluid from the surgery site. Except when the bulb is being emptied, the air should always be evacuated from the bulb; otherwise, it obstructs drainage. The bulb contains a vacuum when it is partially or completely collapsed and not filled with air or fluid. As the days pass, the drainage usually decreases in volume and lightens in color, so that the bulb needs to be emptied less frequently. The drain can usually be removed 4-14 days after surgery. Please empty the bulb at least once each day at the same time, so we can judge the drainage over a 24-hour period. If you have more than one drain, label them (e.g. A, B, C, D), so we know the drainage from each drain. Keep a record of the amount of drainage you empty on a spreadsheet. Please bring this record with you to your post op visits until the drain is removed. This record helps the physician judge when it is OK to remove the drains.

The bulb should be emptied when it is 1/3 to 1/2 full. Initially, remove the stopper and allow the bulb to fill with air. Note the fluid volume by markings on the bulb. To note fluid volume between markings, you can estimate, or use a tablespoon (15cc) or a teaspoon (5cc) to help with estimating. Write down the date, time, color and fluid volume. Turn the bulb upside down over a sink and squeeze it to expel all the fluid, then squeeze the bulb to expel all the air and reinsert the stopper. The tab on the bulb allows it to be secured to undergarments with a safety pin.

Do not place foreign objects in the drain as this may cause an infection to occur at the surgical site. If you should lose the stopper to the drain, please call the office or answering service for instructions.

The paging service number is 313-745-0203 the enter pager 0978#.

When you return to the office for drain removal, please bring the paper with the record of the fluid volume. We cannot remove the drain without that sheet of paper. If you have any questions, please give us a call.

The above instructions have been explained to me, and I understand the contents of this post-operative instruction sheet.

Patient Signature:

Date: