

Texas Breast Surgeons

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Drain Care Instructions

You may be sent home with a Jackson-Pratt or Blake drain(s). This drain will help healing and reduce the risk of infection by keeping fluid from collecting beneath your incision. It is attached to a drainage bulb where you will see fluid, blood and small pieces of tissue.

Some things to be aware of in regard to your drain are....

- You may feel some burning or pulling from the stitch that holds the tube in place.
- Your drain will be removed when the fluid collected is less than 30 ml (cc) for more than one 24-hour period.
- Keep a chart of the drainage and bring this with you to all appointments.
- Drainage amount will fluctuate at times, but a gradual decrease is normal.

Daily care of your drain

- Safety pin the drain to your shirt or bra. Alternatively you can use a shoestring or lanyard to hold the drain and then place the shoestring or lanyard around your neck. It is not recommended that you pin the drain to your pants.
- Empty the drain at least twice a day and record the output for each individual drain in ml or cc (do not measure in ounces.)
 - Lift the plug on the opening of the drain.
 - Drain the fluid into a measuring cup.
 - Record the drainage amount with the date and time for each drain on the attached chart.
 - Squeeze the bulb until almost all of the air is out of it and replace the plug on the opening before releasing.
 - Keep the site where the drain enters the skin covered with antibiotic ointment and a band-aid or gauze dressing. This dressing can be changed daily.
 - Once or twice a day you will need to strip the drain. To do this, pinch the drain tubing as close to the skin/bandage as possible. While holding this “pinch” securely in one hand, pinch or squeeze the drain tubing with the other hand while sliding down the tubing. This will relieve any “clogging” of the drain by tissue. If you begin to have leakage at the drain site, stripping will most often relieve the obstruction.

When to call about your drain

- Expanding redness around the drain site or incision that extends further than 1” from the incision in the skin.
- Chills or fever above 101 F.
- The drain stitch pulls out of the skin or the drain falls out.
- Drainage in the tubing or bulb changes and appears to be pus or bright/dark red fresh blood.
- You cannot get your drain to un-clog with stripping and fluid is collecting beneath your incision.