



Home care of Bulb Drains

Your drain is a small plastic reservoir, which creates a gentle suction to remove excess fluid from a surgical wound. The color and amount of fluid will vary. Immediately after surgery the fluid is bright red and it gradually dilutes to straw-color. Typically your drains can be removed when the output is less than 25-30cc in a 24 hour period of time for a least 2 days. Drains can remain in for 2-4 weeks.

Daily care of bulb drain:

- Keep bulb compressed at all times except while emptying it. The compression creates the suction.
- Keep site where the tubes enter the skin dry, and cover with a light dressing.
- Attach tubes to clothing to keep from pulling on stitches. Tubes are stitched in place and will not slip out.
- Pin bulbs to clothes with a safety pin or, if tubes are long enough, tuck into underwear.
- The first few days after surgery, there usually is more fluid in the bulb. Empty bulb whenever it becomes half full. The bulb does not create enough suction if it's too full. Record the amount emptied each time on the reverse side of this form.
- When drainage decreases, empty bulbs twice daily and record amounts for each day.
- If drainage around the tube site is noted, just change dressing and keep area dry. If you see a clot in the tube, just leave it; however, if the tube does not appear to be draining, let your physician know.
- You may shower 24 hours after your surgery.

To empty bulb:

- Open stopper to release stopper.
- Read the markings directly on the bulb then dispose of the drainage. Holding stopper out of the way, pour drainage into toilet or sink. The markings on the bulb measure in cc's, not ounces.
- Measure and write down amount. If there are two bulbs, note right and/or left drainage and keep totals separate. Your will physician will want to know which tube is draining more.
- Compress bulb by folding it in half.
- Replace stopper.
- You may then pin bulb to clothing through the plastic tongue on the drain.

Once your drain is at around 20cc per 24 hrs for 2 days- we will schedule you to get it removed. This is typically around 10-14 days post op.

If you have any problems, please call our office at 763-559-4500