Home Management of Surgical Drains

Your child is going home with one or more surgical drains in place. In order to keep the drains working correctly it will be necessary for you to care for them by:

- "Stripping" the tubing
- Emptying the collection device
- Restarting the suction
- Recording the amount of drainage

It is important to wash your hands with soap and water before and after caring for the drain(s).

**Jackson-Pratt® (JP) Drain (or Bulb Type Device):**

Strip the drain(s) every _______ hours while your child is awake and every _______ hours at night.

1. The drain is stripped by pinching the tubing shut at the highest point possible next to the wound with your non-dominant hand.

2. At the same time, use the thumb and first finger of your dominant hand to pull or "strip" the tubing toward the collection bulb. This will help to keep the fluid flowing and decrease the chance that the drain will become clogged.

3. Repeat 2 or 3 times every time you strip the drain.

4. Empty the collection bulb every _______ hours and keep a record of the amount of drainage.
   a. Remove the stopper and squeeze the collection bulb to empty it.
   b. Pour the drainage into a small measuring cup.
   c. Measure the amount of drainage. Record the amount of drainage each time you empty the collection bulb. Bring the record with you for follow-up appointments.
   d. Restart the suction in the collection bulb by squeezing it together BEFORE putting the stopper back on. The collection bulb may periodically need the suction restarted even if you have not opened it to empty it.

5. Flush the drainage down the toilet.
**TLS® Drain (or Test Tube Type Device):**

Change the collection test tube every _______ hours while your child is awake and every _______ hours at night. Change the test tube if you notice at any time that the fluid is not moving in the tubing.

1. To change the collection test tube:
   a. Gently strip the drain as described above every time you change the collection test tube.
   b. Use the plastic clamp to clamp the tubing shut.
   c. Remove the old test tube.
   d. Put a new test tube into place.
   e. Remove the plastic clamp and make sure the fluid begins moving in the tubing.

2. To measure the drainage after changing the collection test tube:
   a. Remove the rubber top from the test tube.
   b. Pour the drainage into the measuring cup.
   c. Discard the test tube.
   d. Record the amount of drainage on the written record. Bring this record with you to follow up appointments.

3. Flush the drainage down the toilet.

**Call your child’s health care provider or the Plastic Surgery nurse practitioner at __________________ if:**

- Your child has a fever greater than 101° F (38.3° C).
- Your child complains of pain unrelieved by pain medication.
- There is a large increase in the amount of drainage.
- The drainage becomes bloody again after not being bloody.
- The drain is not functioning.
- The drain comes out.
- The area around the drain or incision swells, becomes reddened, or has any other drainage not collected in the collection device.
- You have questions or concerns regarding the drain or your child’s condition.