

## **Drain Care Instructions**

Each morning empty the drain (see steps below) and write down the output. You may empty the bulb again as needed throughout the day whenever it is half to two-thirds full. Keep a list of the total output for each 24-hour period. If you have more than one drain, list a separate total for each. Bring this list to your appointment as this is used to decide if your drains are ready to come out.

Steps:

1. Wash hands thoroughly before handling the drain(s).
2. Strip the drain - squeeze the tubing at the top near your skin then slide your fingers down towards the bulb. If you wet your fingers first, this will be easier. The goal is to move any clots down into the bulb.
3. Open the valve (bulb will expand).
4. Measure and record the amount of fluid contained within the bulb. Measurement notches are printed on the side of the bulb.
5. Gently squeeze the fluid from the bulb into a cup, bowl or directly into the sink.
6. Squeeze the bulb tightly in your hand and close the valve with your other hand to reactivate the suction.

If the output is less than 25 cc in a 24-hour period for 2 days, please call for an appointment with your plastic surgeon to have the drains removed. If you do not have a plastic surgeon, then call for an appointment with Dr. Kinney.

You can expect the drainage to be red for 2-3 days then turn pink and finally clear yellow in color. Sometimes the fluid will turn back to a more pink or red color.

You are not permitted to drive until all drains are removed.

Call your physician if:

1. If you develop a rash or redness around the drain site, first stop applying polysporin ointment and/or change the type of tape used. If the rash or redness persists, begins spreading, or is associated with fevers, increasing pain, or drainage directly from the incision site, then notify the physician.
2. Notify the physician if the fluid becomes cloudy or looks like frank blood.
3. Notify the physician if the drain is accidentally dislodged (partially or fully) or is unable to maintain suction.

## **Drain Site Dressing Instructions**

### Showering Instructions:

1. You should begin showering 1-2 days after surgery unless instructed differently by your plastic surgeon. When showering, use a ribbon, necklace or long string tied around your waist or neck to secure your drains. Avoid submerging in a bathtub or pool until 2 days after drains are removed.
2. If your dressing is a clear see-through square, then this type is waterproof and you may shower the day after surgery. You may shower with it in place. Leave the dressing over the drain site in place until it loses its seal. Once it loses its seal, then remove the dressing and wash the area daily with soap and water. Replace a new dressing daily after showering per the instructions below.
3. If your dressing is made of gauze and tape, then wait 2 days until showering. Remove the dressing prior to showering and wash the area with soap and water. Replace daily after showering per the instructions below.

### New Drain Site Dressing:

#### Supplies Needed (found at any drug store.):

- Polysporin or Triple Antibiotic Ointment (like Neosporin)
- Sterile dressing sponges or gauze
- Q tips
- Medical Tape (recommend paper tape)

#### Steps:

1. After showering, apply antibiotic ointment to the drain site with a clean Q-tip.
2. Apply sterile dressing sponges or gauze to cover the drain site.
3. Secure with tape.

