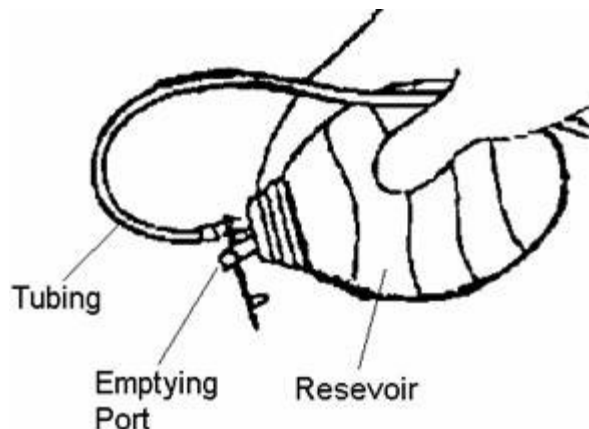


Introduction - what is the drain for?

During surgery, tubes (drains) are commonly placed under the skin to allow excess blood and other fluids out of the body. Drains are helpful in decreasing the risk of infection and allowing the surgical wound to heal faster. These drains come in a few different shapes and sizes, but most are patterned after the original suction drain called the Jackson Pratt drain. All of them work on the same principle however. The drain is actually inside your body. The tubing from the drain (which is usually sutured to the skin at the exit site) connects to a "resevoir". The resevoir, when squeezed empty and re-connected to the tubing applies suction to the drain and pulls the fluid out of the body.



Your drains are removed when the excess fluids have finished draining from your body. Removal of the drains is usually done by your surgeon during an office visit several days or weeks after surgery.

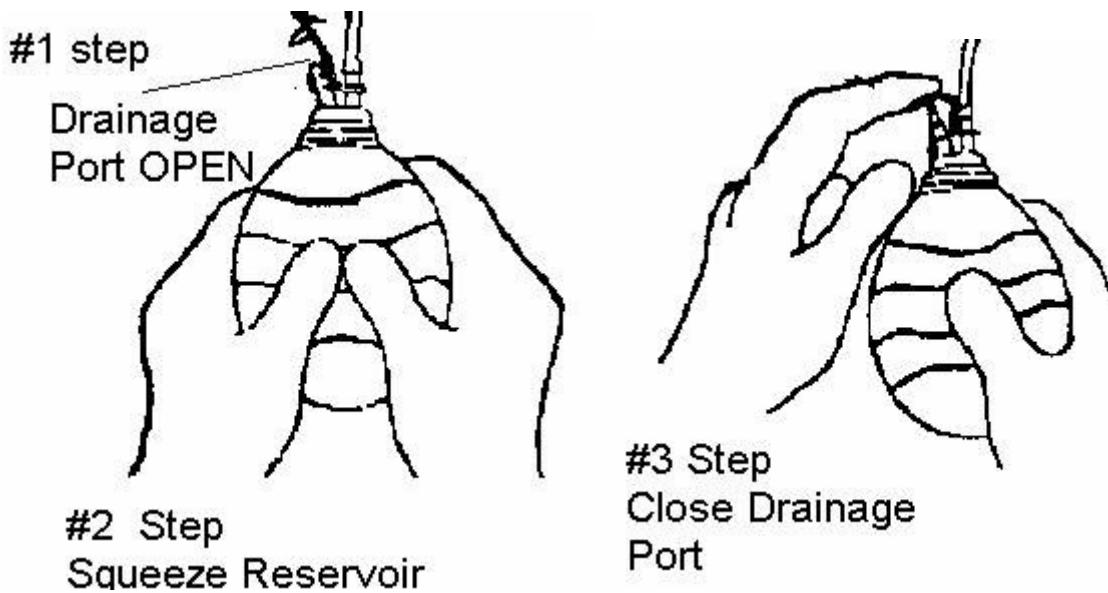
The following instructions will help you care for your drains at home. Call your surgeon's office if you have any questions about your drains.

How do I Empty My Drain?

1. Wash your hands,
2. Strip or "milk" drainage tubing going from exit site (out of your body) downward to container.

To Strip:

- a) Beginning at exit site, hold drainage tubing with one hand and with the other hand stretch and release tubing an inch at a time, while moving downward, with both hands, towards the container.
 - b) Do this 2-3 times before emptying the container.
3. Remove plug from container's spout or 'drainage port'.
 4. Pour drainage into measuring cup.
 5. Flatten container to create a vacuum and replace plug from drainage port. The vacuum helps to draw out the fluids from under your skin. See following figures for description.



- Emptying the container 3 times a day or as often as needed if it is filling up before 8 hours. Using the chart provided, record the date and the amount of your drainage. Your surgeon will need this information. If you have more than one drain, record the amount from each drain separately.

What Things Should I Report to Your Doctor

- Redness or swelling of skin or significant drainage around the area where the tube exits the body.
- Inability to flatten the drainage container. This may signify a leak in the drainage tubing.
- Your tube falls out.

What are Helpful Hints that might help

- Safety pin the drainage container to your clothing during the day and to your sleep wear at night. Allow enough slack for accidental tugging of the tube during daily activities and sleep. Do not put the safety pin through the tubing or the reservoir.
- Do not attach the drainage container to your pants or underwear.
- Attach container below the level of exit site.
- When you shower, tie a string to the drainage container and loop it around your neck or tie it around your waist.

Date _____

AM Amount

PM Amount

Eve Amount