

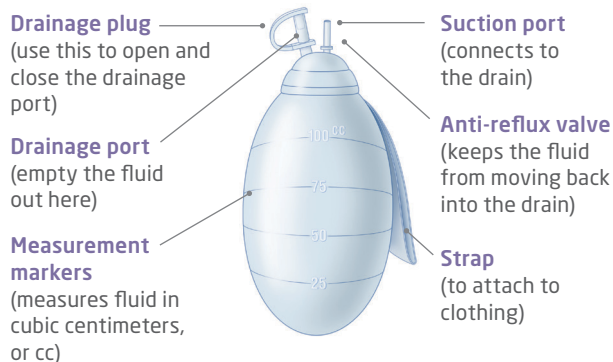
Instructions After Surgery: How to Take Care of Your Drain and Drain Site

A surgical drain removes fluid from your surgery site and helps your wound heal. It is a soft, flexible, plastic tube attached to a plastic bulb. When the bulb has no air in it, it creates a suction to help draw fluid through the tube.

Before you leave the hospital, you will learn how to care for the drain and drain site. We usually remove drains between 7 and 21 days after surgery. Your physician will decide when to remove your drain according to the volume and color of the output.

Be sure to follow these instructions. We will give you forms to write down how much fluid you drain from the bulb. Be sure to write this down and bring the forms to your next appointment.

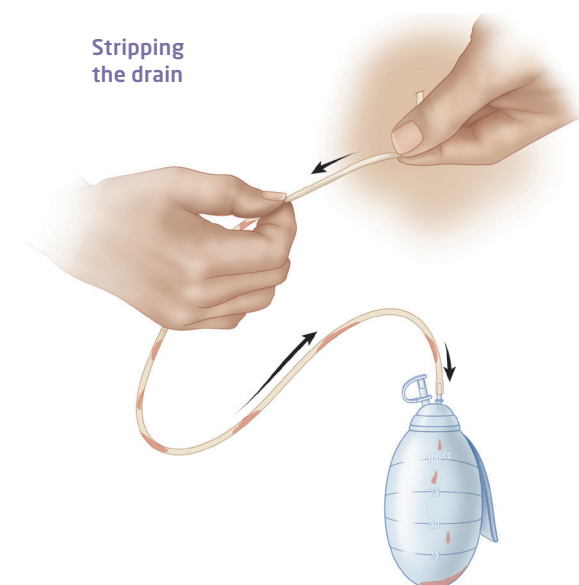
Empty your drain 1 or 2 times a day. Even if there is not much fluid, make sure that you empty it every day.



Care of the drain and drain site

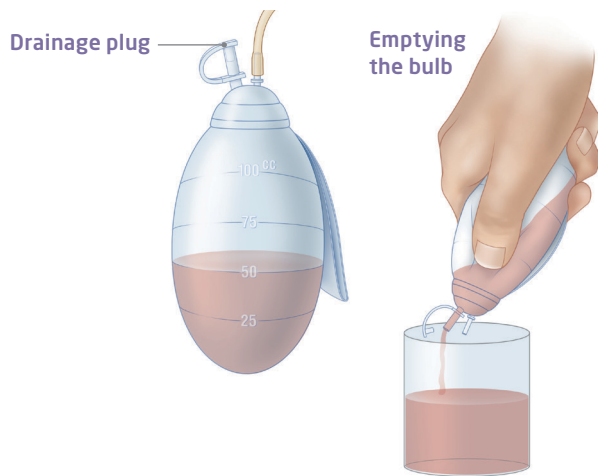
The drain should be “stripped” 3 or 4 times a day while you are awake. To do this, use 1 hand to hold the drain securely next to the area where the tube comes out of your body. Use the other hand’s thumb and forefinger to squeeze the tube, moving all the way down the tube to the bulb.

Make sure your drain exit site is always covered. If the dressing falls off or the clear sterile tape (Tegaderm™) peels off, apply Betadine® or antibiotic ointment. Then cover it with gauze and clear sterile tape.



To empty the bulb

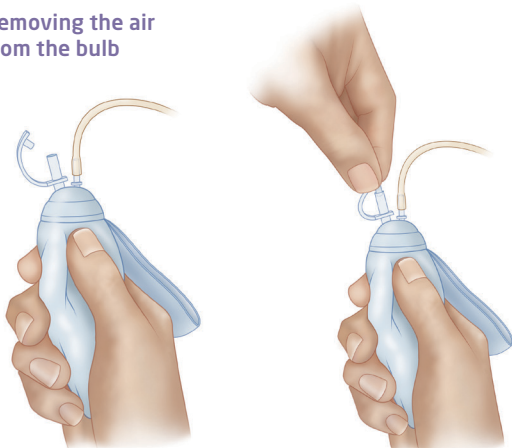
1. Wash your hands.
2. Strip the drain (see page 1).
3. Hold the bulb up with the drainage plug on top.
4. Remove the drainage plug.
5. Let the bulb fully expand.
6. Turn the bulb upside down. Gently squeeze the fluid into the medicine cup.
7. Place the medicine cup on the counter.



After you empty the drain

1. Remove the air in the bulb by squeezing it and folding it in half.
2. Keep the bulb folded and close the drainage plug.
3. Release the bulb. It should not fill up with air.
4. Wash your hands.
5. Write down how much fluid you drained from the bulb.
6. Dispose of fluid and rinse the medicine cup.

Removing the air from the bulb



Important to remember

Always wash your hands before and after handling the drain.

Be sure to empty the bulb before it fills completely. If you do not, the drain will not work properly.

Write down how much fluid you empty from the bulb each time.

Keep the drain plug tightly in place. You must have an airtight seal for the drain to work properly.

Pay attention to how your wound is healing.

Do not change the drain exit site dressing. It is covered with a clear tape called Tegaderm. Keep the drain exit site covered with Tegaderm at all times.

You can shower as long as the Tegaderm is in place. If it comes off, apply new Tegaderm. We will give you this.

After the drain is removed

Keep the drain site covered, clean and dry for 48 hours. If the dressing falls off sooner, cover the site again with the dressing supplies we give you (antibiotic ointment, gauze, Tegaderm).

You may shower in 48 hours.

Call your physician if:

The drain falls out

There is no output from your drain in a 24-hour period or the drain is clogged

You have redness around the site bigger than a quarter (local irritation is normal and expected)

You have fluids around the drain site

The bulb does not stay flat after you remove the air and close the drain plug
