

# Discharge advice for patients leaving hospital with a wound drain



**Information for patients**  
Plastic Surgery



**PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

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## **What is a wound drain?**

Following surgery a wound drain may be inserted. This is used to help prevent fluid collecting and causing swelling.

Before you leave hospital you will be shown how to look after your drain.

You can use a bag to carry your drain in.

## **How long will the drain be in place?**

The drain will normally stay in place for around 2-7 days. Sometimes it will remain in longer, this will depend on the amount of fluid drained within a 24 hour period.

Your drain will be removed:

When the drainage is less than \_\_\_\_\_ ml in 24 hours,

or

On day \_\_\_\_\_

## **How is the amount of fluid from the drain measured?**

During your stay in hospital the amount of fluid collected in your drain is monitored every 24 hours. This is usually done at 6am. The nursing staff will put a mark on the bottle to show where the level of drainage is. The bottle has lines and numbers on it to make it simple and easy.

When you are at home, you can measure the amount of fluid in your drain each morning at a time that is convenient for you. It is important however, that the 24 hour output is measured at about the same time each day. If a district nurse is attending, they will record the drainage for you and remove it when indicated

If you have been asked to take your own readings, call the plastics dressing clinic (contact details are at the end of the leaflet). Once it has reached the specified amount or day it needs to be removed and they will arrange for you to come in to do this.

## **How do I empty or change the drainage bottle?**

You will be provided with a spare drainage bottle which you will be able to change at home if necessary.

The bottle will only need changing if:

- The bottle is full
- The red vacuum prongs are straight up together indicating there is not enough suction
- The tubing disconnects

Do not panic. Just follow the steps as demonstrated by your nurse prior to discharge. If it continues to devac (lose suction and the prongs on the top of the drain change position.), do not worry contact the dressings clinic or ward F2 for advice.

# Who do I contact if I have any concerns about my wound drain?

If you have any concerns please contact:

**Plastics Dressings Clinic**

**01142265147 (Monday - Friday, answer machine checked regularly)**

**Ward F2, Royal Hallamshire Hospital**

**0114 226 8321**



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