

Breast Patients Discharged with Redivac Drains

Introduction

Following surgery to the breast and/or under arm a wound drain may be inserted. This helps prevent swelling caused by fluid collecting and also helps to minimise bruising.

The drain will normally stay in for 5-7 days depending on the amount of drainage over a 24 hour period. While you are in hospital your output over a 24 hour period is measured at 8am and the bottle is marked accordingly. The ward nurse will also record this on a drainage chart.

Discharge

A copy of the drainage chart will be given to you on discharge for you to continue to complete at home. On discharge it is important to measure the 24 hour output at the same time each day. Your ward nurse will show you how to measure the drainage (see picture 1).

The drain will be removed by a district nurse when the draining fluid is clear and measures less than 50mls in 24 hours.



Picture 1. A Redivac drain showing the measuring scale.

See pictures 2 and 3 below.

You will be given a spare drainage bottle to take home as the district nurse may need to change the bottle for the following reasons:

- A) if the bottle is full.
- B) If the green vacuum indicator is completely expanded (indicating that there is no suction left);
- C) If the tubing disconnects.



Picture 2. Showing maximum vacuum (suction)



Picture 3. Expanded indicator showing minimum vacuum (suction)

If any of the above occurs please contact your district nurse but do not panic.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the old bottles are brought back to the hospital for correct disposal, either to the ward or to the out patient department. You will be given an orange bag to put the bottles in for disposal.

Telephone Numbers

Breast Care Nurses: Direct Line (01234) 792057

Hospital: (01234) 355122 Ext: 2041/5268 Bleeps: 112/402

Howard Ward: (01234) 792245

District Nurses: Ward staff will liaise with district nurses.