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POST-OPERATIVE DRAIN INSTRUCTIONS

[**Don't shower while you have drains in place.**

[When you leave the hospital, keep track of the drainage in each drain. Do this in the morning and evening. Strip or milk the drainage toward the bulb and then you can take the drain off suction. Record your drainage in each drain. After recording the fluid in each drain, you can empty the contents in the toilet. **BE SURE TO SQUEEZE THE DRAIN AND PUT THE TOP BACK INTO THE BULB.** This is the only way the drain will work.

Unless you are experiencing some sort of complication, you will be seen for your first post-op visit when one drain is at 30 cc/ per 24 hours/ per drain and ready to be removed. Possible complications that we would like to be notified about are a temperature of 101 or more, excessive swelling or pain, drainage that becomes cloudy after one week, or a drain that is not draining. Call the office if this happens. Strip or milk the fluid from the top of the drain down to the bulb at least two times per day to keep it open.

You will need to keep track of the amount of fluid in each drain every time you empty the bulb. Please write the amount emptied from each drain and the time of day. Add the measurements for a **24 hour** period of time. When the total for **each individual** drain reaches **30cc** or less for a full 24-hour period, that drain is ready to be removed. For example, if you compile your drainage from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. the next day, then this total equals a 24 hour period. At this point, give the office a call and you will be given an appointment to come have it removed. If you have several drains in place, you might want to wait until several are ready to save yourself a trip. That is up to you.

Most drains are not left in place for longer than 14 days. Drains are usually ready in seven to ten days following surgery; however, some may be sooner. **Do not go more than seven days without giving the office a call.**

The drain site is to be cleaned with ½ part peroxide and ½ part saline. After cleaning, apply a small amount of antibiotic ointment and then a dressing around the drain. Do this until the drain is removed and site is healed.

The nurses should go over this with you before you leave the hospital. Of course, if you have any further questions during your post-operative period, do not hesitate to call the office.