

Respiratory medicine

Looking after your indwelling pleural catheter at home

Information for patients and community teams

Introduction

This information follows on from the Rocket Medical 'Information for patients and nurses' pack which the hospital should have given you. This contains detailed information about drainage, including frequently asked questions.



Who will drain the fluid?

Your district nurse will visit you within the next five days to complete your first home drainage. If you feel confident with the indwelling pleural catheter (IPC) and the drainage process, your nurse can teach you how to drain the IPC yourself and how to keep the catheter and attachments clean.

How will the fluid be drained?

Your district nurse will remove the protective dressing and clean the catheter, wearing sterile gloves. They will then attach the drainage bottle to your catheter and slowly start to drain the fluid by pressing the button on the tubing. If this becomes uncomfortable please let them know so they can slow down the rate of drainage or even stop the drainage.

When will the fluid be drained?

Initially, the fluid will be drained every two to three days. Usually one bottle of fluid will be drained each time. As the collection of fluid becomes smaller, the frequency of the drainages will reduce – you may only require drainage once a week and then possibly less often than that. If there is no more fluid to drain, either you or your district nurse should contact the hospital team. We can then assess you and, if appropriate, arrange for your catheter to be removed.



How do I get more drainage bottles?

Your district nurse and GP can arrange this for you. They have the product details and can arrange for you to collect the drainage bottles from your local pharmacy. You can also find details about the drainage bottles in your Rocket Medical information pack.

What happens to the bottles?

Your district nursing team will ask your local council to collect them.

What about my stitches?

Your doctor has inserted two stitches to temporarily hold the drain in place; one at the catheter exit site and one approximately five centimetres (cm) from this. **Both** stitches will be removed after 10 days by your district nurse. This should not be painful.

Who should I call for help and advice?

If you have any queries or concerns about dates and times for drainage, please contact your district nurse team.

Your named district nurse is:

Their number is:

If you have any questions about your diagnosis and future hospital care, please contact the respiratory sister at St Mary's Hospital on **020 3312 1836**.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your hospital visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's Hospital). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net. The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf. Alternatively, you may wish to express your concerns in **writing** to: Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY.

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print, as a sound recording, in Braille, or in alternative languages. Please contact the communications team on **020 3312 5592**.