

Caring for Your Child with a Blake Drain



Cardiology Department

4480 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3V4
604-875-2345 1-888-300-3088
www.bcchildrens.ca

What is a Blake Drain?

Sometimes after heart surgery, your child may need to have a drain in their chest called a "Blake Drain." This drain is kept in until the amount of fluid in your child's chest is low enough for it to be removed. Your child is well and may not need to stay in the hospital while waiting for the fluid to drain. This information sheet will help answer some frequently asked questions on how to care for your child and Blake Drain at home.

If your answers are not found here or you have any concerns about your child or the Drain, please do not hesitate to contact the Nurse Practitioners at 604-875-2345 ext. 8968. For weekend or after hours, please contact Cardiology On-Call at 604-875-2161.

How to Change the Dressing and Clean the Site

Change the Blake Drain dressing and clean the site **every 48 hours** or as needed.

1. Wash your hands.
2. Get the supplies that have been provided in the dressing pack and have them ready.
3. Remove your child's Blake Drain dressing and check the exit site for:
 - Signs of infection (redness, swelling, drainage around site)
 - Placement
4. Throw away the old dressing. Then wash your hands again.
5. Wet the sterile gauze with normal saline.

6. Pick up the 2x2 gauze by the edges.
7. Clean site by beginning in the center and working outward **once**.
8. Repeat steps 5-7 again.
9. Gently and thoroughly pat dry.
10. Cover the site with a new dressing.

How to Manage the Blake Drain

1. During the day, inspect the bulb and tubing **every 4 hours** for blockage, cracks, holes or kinks. At night, you can do this less often.
2. Make sure the bulb is compressed at all times. This means that there is little to no air in the bulb. Notify the Nurse Practitioners if the bulb does not compress and if bulb continually fills with air.
3. Strip the tubing **every 2 hours during the day**. Starting closest to your child, hold the tubing at that end firmly with one hand and then with other hand, wrap an alcohol wipe around the tubing and squeeze and pull the length of the tubing towards the bulb. The doctor/nurse practitioner will tell you how often to do this during the night before you leave the hospital.

How to Empty and Record the Drain

1. Open the cap.
2. Empty the bulb **every 4 hours** using a luer lock syringe.
3. Squeeze the bulb while closing the cap.

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- Record the amount/volume and colour of the fluid emptied from the bulb every 4 hours on the *Record of Blake Drainage Sheet*. Notify the Nurse Practitioners if there are any sudden changes in fluid volume or colour.

- Attach new bulb (you will be provided with an extra bulb).
- Notify the Nurse Practitioners that you will need a new back up bulb

Emergency Procedures

If a Blake Drain falls out or is pulled out by your child:

- Cover exit site with sterile 2x2 gauze, firmly hold gauze in place and apply dressing over the gauze.
- Notify the Nurse Practitioners or Cardiology On-Call via paging at 604-875-2161.

If the tubing breaks off or there is a hole in the tubing:

- Pinch end of tubing manually, or pinch the tubing above the hole closer to your child
- Apply clamp provided to you (if broken), or above the hole (closer to the child)
- Notify the Nurse Practitioners or Cardiology On-Call via paging at 604-875-2161.

If the bulb detaches from the tubing:

- Pinch end of tubing manually.
- Clean end of tubing with alcohol swabs for 30 seconds. Allow to dry for 1 minute.

Other Helpful Information

- Your child can have sponge baths until the drain is out.
- Always keep your child's Blake Drain pinned to their clothing so it does not drag or pull.