



DeKalb Medical Physicians Group

DeKalb General Surgery & Surgical Oncology

Michael A Quinones, MD, FACS
Victoria Y Lee, MD
2675 North Decatur Road, Ste 609
Decatur, GA 30033
404-501-9170

Closed Suction Drain with Bulb

A closed suction drain is used to remove fluids that build up in areas of your body after surgery or when you have an infection. Although there is more than one brand of closed suction drain, most people refer to this drain as a Jackson-Pratt, or JP, drain

The JP drain is made up of 2 parts:

- A thin rubber tube
- A soft round squeeze bulb that looks like a grenade

One end of the rubber tube is placed in the area of your body where fluid may build up. The other end comes out through a small incision (cut). A squeeze bulb is attached to this outer end.

Ask your provider when you may take a shower while you have this drain. You may be asked to take a sponge bath until the drain is removed.

Emptying Your Drain

- Items you will need are:
- A measuring cup
 - A pen or pencil and a piece of paper

Empty the drain before it gets full. You may need to empty your drain every few hours at first, but as the amount of drainage decreases, you may be able to empty it once or twice a day.

- Wash your hands with soap and water
- Get your measuring cup ready.
- Open the bulb cap. Do NOT touch the inside of the cap.
- Empty the fluid into the measuring cup.
- Squeeze the JP bulb and hold it flat.
- While the bulb is squeezed flat, close the cap.

Write down the amount of fluid that you drained out and date and time each time you empty your JP drain. Flush the fluid down the toilet and wash your hands.

Changing Your Dressing

You might have a dressing around the drain where it comes out of your body. If you do not have a dressing, just keep the skin around the drain clean and dry. If you are allowed to shower, just clean the area with soapy water and pat it dry with a towel. If you are not allowed to shower, just clean the area with a washcloth, cotton swabs, or gauze.

2675 N. Decatur Road, Suite 609
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5910 Hillendale Drive, Suite 203
Lithonia, GA 30058

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If you do have a dressing around the drain, you will need the following items:

- Two pairs of clean, unused, sterile medical gloves
- Five or 6 cotton swabs
- Gauze pads
- Clean soapy water
- Plastic trash bag
- Surgical tape
- Waterproof pad or bath towel

Wash your hands with soap and water. Dry your hands and put on clean gloves. Loosen the tape carefully and take off the old bandage. Throw the old bandage into the plastic trash bag. Look for any new redness, swelling, bad odor or pus.

Use a cotton swab dipped in soapy water to clean the skin around the drain. Do this 3 or 4 times, using a new swab each time. Take off the first pair of medical gloves and put them in the plastic trash bag. Put on the second pair of gloves.

Put a new bandage around the drain tube site. Use surgical tape to hold it down against your skin. Tape the tubing to the bandages. Attach the bulb to your clothing with a safety pin. It should not hang loosely. Throw all used supplies in the trash bag. Wash your hands.

Clogged Drain

If there is no fluid draining into the bulb, there may be a clot or other material. If you notice this:

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Gently squeeze the tubing where the clot is, to loosen it.
- Grip the drain with the fingers of one hand, close to where it comes out of your body.
- With the fingers of your other hand, squeeze down the length of the tube. Start where it comes out of your body and move toward the drainage bulb. This is called “stripping” the drain.
- Release your fingers from the end of the drain where it comes out of your body and then release the end near the bulb.
- You might find it easier to strip the drain if you put lotion or hand cleaner on your hands.
- Do this several times until fluid is draining into the bulb.

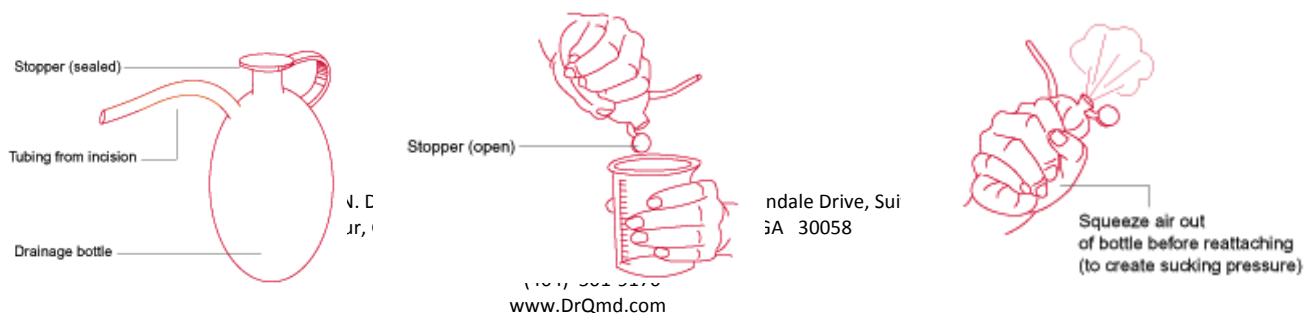
When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor if:

- Stitches that hold the drain to your skin are coming loose or are missing.
- The tube falls out.
- Your temperature is higher than 100° F or 38.0°C.
- Your skin is very red where the tube comes out (a small amount of redness is normal).
- There is drainage from the skin around the tube site.
- There is more tenderness and swelling at the drain site.
- Your drainage is cloudy or has a bad odor.
- Drainage from the bulb increases for more than 2 days in a row
- The squeeze bulb will not stay collapsed.
- The drainage stops suddenly when the drain has been steadily putting out fluid.

Alternate Names

Jackson Pratt drain, JP drain



- Open the cap (stopper)
- Turn bulb upside down and squeeze fluid into the measurement container
- Keep the cap (stopper) open and squeeze the bulb
- Close the cap (stopper)

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