



Going home with a redivac drain following breast surgery

During your breast operation you may have a drain called ‘redivac’ inserted. This leaflet explains why you have it, how to use it safely and how to care for your wound after leaving hospital.

Why do I need a redivac drain?

The redivac drain prevents swelling caused by fluid collecting in the wound and also helps to minimise bruising. It can stay in for a number of days or weeks, depending on how much fluid collects over a 24-hour period. While you are in hospital, your output (the amount of fluid coming from your wound) will be measured over a 24-hour period and the bottle will be marked accordingly. This will be done at 6am and the ward nurse will record the measurement on a drainage chart.



Going home

If you are discharged home with a redivac drain, it is important to measure the 24-hour output at a time convenient for you, but bear in mind that should be always at the same time each day (such as in the morning). Your ward nurse will show you how to measure the drainage before you leave the hospital. The nurse will tell you when you need to come back to hospital for an assessment and/or removal of the drain. The redivac drain bottle may need changing for a number of reasons, such as when the bottle is full, if the vacuum indicator is completely expanded (indicating that there is no suction left) or if the tubing disconnects.



Picture 2 (far left) shows the green concertina-like valve fully contracted, which shows maximum vacuum or suction.

Picture 3 (left) shows the green concertina-like valve fully expanded, which shows there is no or very little vacuum or suction.

Remember to keep the drain at floor level to allow for the best possible drainage at home. If you experience any of these problems or have a query or concern about your redivac drain, please contact the General Surgical Unit (GSU) (telephone numbers at the end of this leaflet).

General wound care

The dressings over the drain and wound site are generally splash-proof or waterproof so you may shower when you go home. Do not remove these dressings. You will be seen by the surgical team, usually around 10 days after surgery. They will remove the dressings and assess the wound during this appointment. **However, if there is a lot of wound leakage, please call us for a review and we may recommend a change of dressing.**

Please return the used fluid bottles back to the hospital for correct disposal or drop them off at the outpatient department (where your follow-up appointment will be held).

How to contact us

Lister Ward (General Surgical Unit) 0118 322 7572

Hunter Ward (General Surgical Unit) 0118 322 7535

Or email GeneralSurgicalUnit@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Breast Care Nurse Specialists: 0118 322 7420 or email: breastcarenurses@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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