



## BUFFALO PLASTIC SURGERY

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### Drain Care

The Jackson Pratt drainage system (JP drain) draws out fluid that collects under your incision (surgical cut) after your surgery. It has a soft plastic bulb with a stopper and flexible tubing attached. The drainage end of the tubing (flat white portion) is placed into your surgical site through a small opening near your incision. This area is called the insertion site. A suture (stitch) will hold it in place. The rest of the tube will extend outside your body and will be attached to the bulb.

When the bulb is compressed (squeezed) with the stopper in place, a constant gentle suction is created. The bulb should be compressed at all times, except when you are emptying the drainage.

How long you will have your Jackson-Pratt depends on your surgery and the amount of drainage you're having. Everyone's drainage is different. Some people drain a lot, some only a little. The Jackson-Pratt is usually removed when the drainage is 30 mL or less over 24 hours. You will record the amount of drainage in the drainage log. It's important to bring the log with you to your follow-up appointments.

### Caring for your Jackson-Pratt at home will involve the following:

1. Milking the tubing to help move clots.
  2. Emptying the drain 4 times a day and recording the amount of drainage on the Jackson- Pratt Drainage Record.
- If you have more than 1 drain, make sure to measure and record the drainage of each one separately. Do not add them together

**Milking the tubing-** These steps will help you move clots through the tubing and keep the drainage flowing. Milk the tubing before you open the stopper to empty and measure your drainage. You should also do this if you see fluid leaking around the insertion site.

1. Clean your hands. To wash your hands with soap and water, wet your hands, apply soap, rub them together thoroughly for 15 seconds, then rinse. Dry your hands with a disposable towel, and use that same towel to turn off the faucet. If you're using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, cover all of your hands with it, rubbing them together until they're dry.
2. Look in the mirror at the tubing. This will help you see where your hands need to be.
3. Pinch the tubing close to where it goes into your skin between the thumb and forefinger of your hand. This will help to make sure that you're not tugging on your skin, which can be painful.
4. With the thumb and forefinger of your other hand, pinch the tubing right below your other fingers. Keeping your fingers pinched; slide them down the tubing, pushing any clots down toward the drainage bulb. You may want to use alcohol wipes to help you slide your fingers down the tubing.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 as necessary to push clots from the tubing into the bulb. If you are not able to move a clot into the bulb and there is little or no drainage in the bulb, call your doctor or nurse.

**Emptying your Jackson-Pratt drain and recording the drainage-** You will need to empty your Jackson-Pratt 4 times a day.

1. Prepare a clean area to work on and gather your supplies. This can be done in your bathroom or in an area with a dry, uncluttered surface.
2. Clean your hands. To wash your hands with soap and water, wet your hands, apply soap, rub them together thoroughly for 15 seconds, then rinse. Dry your hands with a disposable towel, and use that same towel to turn off the faucet. If you're using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, cover all of your hands with it, rubbing them together until they're dry.
3. If the drainage bulb is attached to your garment or wrap, first remove it from there.
4. Unplug the stopper on top of the bulb. This will cause the bulb to expand. Do not touch the inside of the stopper or the inner area of the opening on the bulb.
5. Turn the bulb upside down, gently squeeze the bulb, and pour the drainage into the measuring container (see Figure 2).
6. Turn your bulb right side up.
7. Squeeze the bulb until your fingers feel the palm of your hand.
8. Continue to squeeze the bulb while you replug the stopper.
9. Check to see that the bulb stays fully compressed to ensure a constant gentle suction.
10. Do not let the drain dangle. If you are wearing a surgical bra, there will be either a plastic loop or Velcro® straps attached at the bottom. Attach the drainage bulb to the bra. If you are wearing a wrap, attach the drainage bulb to the wrap. A fanny pack or belt bag may be helpful to hold the drain.
11. Check the amount and color of drainage in the measuring container. The first couple of days after surgery, the fluid may be dark red in color. This is normal. As you continue to heal it may appear pink or pale yellow.
12. Record this amount and the color of drainage on your Jackson-Pratt Drainage Record.
13. Flush the drainage down the toilet and rinse the measuring container with water.
14. At the end of each day, add up the total amount of drainage for the 24-hour period and record it in the last column of the drainage record. If you have more than 1 drain, measure and record each one separately.

### Caring for the Insertion Site

Once you have emptied the drainage, clean your hands again. Check the area around the insertion site. Look for tenderness, swelling, or pus from the insertion site. If you have any of these, or if you have a temperature of 101° F (38.3° C) or higher, you may have an infection. Call your doctor's office. Sometimes the drain causes redness about the size of a dime at your insertion site. This is normal. Keep your insertion site clean and dry by washing it with soap and water and then gently patting it dry.