

## **Surgical Drains**

Surgical drains are used to remove fluids that build up in an area of your body after surgery. The fluid is a mixture of lymphatic fluid, blood cells and debris. Healing can occur more efficiently by removing the fluid. The amount of fluid collected by the drain is related to the extent of the surgical procedure. This means, the more extensive the procedure, the more fluid is produced. The color of the fluid usually begins as cranberry (blood tinged) and as the days after surgery go by, the color becomes pink or yellow. Once the output for a drain is less than 25-30 ml over a 24-hour period, Dr. Liu will remove the drain.

### **How do I empty my drain?**

Empty the bulb when it is half full or every 8 to 12 hours.

Please keep record by completing the following log sheet. Bring records to your follow-up appointments.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Remove the plug from the bulb.
3. Pour the fluid into a measuring cup.
4. Clean the plug with an alcohol swab or a cotton ball dipped in rubbing alcohol. • Squeeze the bulb flat and put the plug back in. The bulb should stay flat until it starts to fill with fluid again.
5. Measure the amount of fluid you pour out. Write down how much fluid you empty from the JP drain and the date and time you collected it.
6. Flush the fluid down the toilet. Wash your hands.

### **When should I call my Doctor?**

Office Number: (310) 933-9944

- You drain less than 30 milliliters (2 tablespoons) in 24 hours. This may mean your drain can be removed.
- You suddenly stop draining fluid or think your drain is blocked.
- You have a fever higher than 101.5°F (38.6°C).
- You have increased pain, redness, or swelling around the drain site.



## Drain Care & Output Measurements

Drains help prevent fluid from collecting in areas that were operated. Please empty the bulbs as necessary and squeeze out the air to keep the bulb deflated and under vacuum pressure. Each time you empty a drain, please keep track of how much has been emptied and bring this record to your post-operative appointments.

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