

How to Change Your Drainage Tube Dressing

Information for patients, families and caregivers

Read this information to learn how to safely change the dressing over your drainage tube so it stays in place.

What is a drainage tube?

You had a drainage tube put into your body. The drainage tube removes fluid out of your body from a different area than it was put in.

The area where the tube was put in is called the **insertion site**. The tube comes out of your body from the **exit site**. Your nurse covers the exit site with gauze and medical tape to keep it in place.

Why do I need to change my drainage tube dressing?

Changing your dressing properly keeps the tube in place and prevents it from getting pulled out by accident.



Follow these steps to change your dressing

1. Gather your supplies.

- Dressing tray (if you do not have a tray, keep the supplies in their packages so they stay clean and germ-free)
- Normal saline (a mixture of salt and water you can buy at your local pharmacy)
 - **Note:** Do not make the solution yourself. If you can't find normal saline, use sterile water with a mild soap.
- Soft cloth surgical tape (for example, Medipore tape)
- Soft cloth adhesive wound dressing (for example, Medipore with pad, size 3564)
- 2 or 3 pieces of 2x2 inch gauze
- A securement device for tubes and drains (UHN uses Grip-lok[®] securement device, 3400L but any securement device is OK)
- Skin protecting spray or wipe (for example, No-Sting Skin-Prep spray or wipe)
- Clean gloves

Examples of supplies



Skin protecting wipe



Normal saline



2X2 inch gauze



Soft cloth wound dressing



Grip-lok[®] securement device



Soft cloth surgical tape

2. Clean and prepare your area.

- Wash your hands.
- Sit or lie down on your bed in a comfortable position.
- Make sure the drainage bag is empty and next to you on the bed to prevent the bag from slipping and the tube being pulled out accidentally.
- Don't touch the skin around the insertion site to keep it clean and germ-free.

3. Change the dressing.

Step 1. Remove the old securement device and dressing.

A **securement device** is the dressing that holds down the tube to your skin so the tube does not fall out.



Step 2. Pull back the Velcro and take out the tube.



Step 3. Remove the insertion site dressing by holding the tube down while removing the tape.

Step 4. Pull the dressing in the opposite direction of the tube and remove the tape gently while holding the tube.



Important: Be extra careful handling the tube when there is no securement device or tape on it. The tube can move out of place easily.

Step 5. Check the insertion site for redness or any other signs of infection.



There may be a mark on the tube which indicates that the tube is in place.

Note: The marking may or may not be there.



Step 6. Clean around the insertion site with normal saline using a circular motion. Do this twice starting from the centre and moving outwards. Use lots of normal saline to clean the area well.



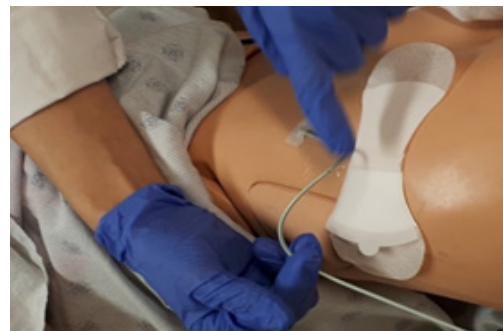
Important: Let the skin air dry before you put on the gauze or the securement device. Any moisture left will irritate the skin. You can use a sterile gauze to pat dry only the skin around the insertion site.

Step 7. Apply skin protectant in the area where the securement device and insertion site surgical tape will be placed.



- Let the area dry before you apply the securement device and the surgical tape.
- Clip any hair in the area because the securement device and surgical tape will not stick to long hair.

Step 8. Place the securement device on the skin 2 centimetres below the insertion site.



Step 9. Pull back the Velcro and place the tube. Put the Velcro over the tube and make sure it is tight.



Important: Hold the securement device on the skin as you pull back the Velcro so the securement device does not detach.

Step 10. Make sure the tube is tightly secured in the securement device by gently pressing the Velcro tape over the tube few times.



Note: If you are using a different type of securement device, make sure the tube is secured tightly in the device. It should be no more than 2 cm or almost fingers width away from the insertion site.

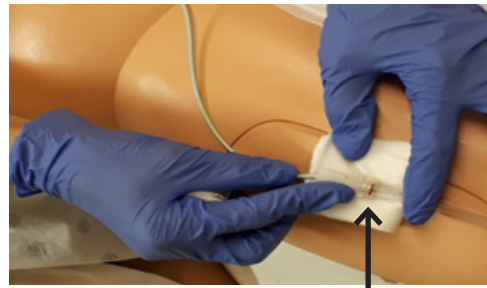
Step 11. Cover the insertion site with the soft cloth adhesive wound dressing (Medipore with pad).



Note: If there is any fluid, you can place a 2x2 gauze on the tube and then apply the soft cloth adhesive wound dressing (Medipore) with pad.

Step 12. Place a gauze under and on top of the connection port to the drainage bag. Cover the area with surgical tape. The tape prevents the tube from getting kinked and also moving out of place.

- Change the securement device every 7 days, or sooner if needed.
- Change the insertion site gauze twice a week if the site is not oozing any fluid or pus and is healing well.



connection port



What if I don't have a securement device?

You can use 2 transparent dressings instead.

Follow these steps to change your dressing using 2 transparent dressings.

Gather your supplies.

- 2 transparent dressings (like Tagaderm®)
- Dry gauze
- Skin protecting wipe (a wipe or spray that protects the skin from irritation to the tape and also makes it stick better to your skin)
- 2 X 2 inch gauze and paper tape or the soft cloth adhesive wound dressing (Medipore) with pad if your tube is still draining fluid from the insertion site

Change your dressing using 2 transparent dressings.

Step 1. Clean the skin below the insertion site with normal saline.

Step 2. Dry the area with a sterile gauze. Apply the skin protectant where you will put the transparent dressing.



Important: Let the skin dry before you put on the gauze or a securement device. Any moisture left will irritate the skin.

Step 3. Put 1 transparent dressing on your skin about 2 centimetres below the exit site.



Step 4. Use another skin protectant to wipe the transparent dressing and your drainage tube. The wipe will make these areas sticky.



Step 5. Curve the tube on the transparent dressing and put another transparent dressing on top (sandwich the tube in place). Press it down gently over the transparent dressing to secure it.



- Do not put the second transparent dressing over the tube where it comes out of your skin.
- Cut the transparent dressing on top smaller so it's easier to take it off.

Step 6. Cover the insertion site with 2 x2 gauze and secure it with tape.



Important: Do not over-tape the area. Check the tape once a day to make sure it's not coming off.

Step 7. Cover the end of the tube (connection port) with a gauze and tape it to the skin. The tape will prevent the tube from getting twisted and kinked.



How do I remove the transparent dressing?

- Remove the top dressing first and hold the tube down so it does not get pulled out.
- Then remove the second transparent dressing.



Remember:

- ✓ The transparent dressing and most securement devices can stay on for 7 to 10 days unless it gets wet or comes off.
- ✓ Trim the hair where you are going to place the tape and use skin protectant to prevent your skin from getting irritated.
- ✓ Remove the transparent dressing against the direction that the tube is inserted.

What if I have questions?

Medical Imaging staff can answer your questions and explain how to care for your tube.

Prepare your questions for your next drainage tube check or change visit.



Problems to watch for

If you have new pain around the insertion site, or your tube

- seems to have pulled out a few centimetres
- is leaking around the insertion site
- is not draining any fluid to the drainage bag

- 1. Call the Medical Imaging Central Booking office at 416 340 3384 to schedule an urgent appointment for tube check and change. We are open Monday to Friday, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm.**
- 2. Call your family doctor or primary care provider to find out if you need to go to a hospital emergency department.**

Notes

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