

# PleurX Catheter

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### How often should I drain the catheter?

- Try to drain the catheter as often as directed by your health care team.
- To start, you will drain the catheter more often to help the fluid dry up, so the catheter can be removed.

### How do I put on a new dressing?

- The catheter should always be covered by a 4 x 4 gauze pad.
- The clear adhesive dressing should cover the gauze. **Do not** put the clear adhesive dressing directly on the catheter.
- Ask for the patient education handout, “Caring for Your PleurX Drainage Catheter at Home”, to learn more about how to care for your catheter.

### What should I do if the dressing bothers me?

- Call your doctor if the dressing causes problems with your skin. There are other dressing options that can be ordered by your doctor if your dressing irritates your skin.
- **Do not** put creams or use skin products under the dressing.

### When is the blue clamp in the kit used?

- The blue clamp is only used if your catheter is accidentally cut or damaged. The blue clamp keeps air from getting in the catheter. **If your catheter becomes damaged, put the clamp on and go to the emergency room.**

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This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

## Will I have pain when I drain the catheter?

- It is normal to have pain when you drain the catheter. At times, the pain may be severe.
- Stop the drainage **right away** by rolling the roller clamp toward the bottle if you have severe pain when you drain the catheter.
- Slowly roll the roller clamp toward yourself and attempt to drain again. If the pain is still severe, call your doctor.
- Drain the fluid more slowly the next time you drain your catheter.
- It may help to take a pain pill 30 minutes before you drain your catheter.
- If you have pain that lasts more than a half hour after draining your catheter, call your doctor.
- **Do not** drain more than 1,000mL of fluid from your chest at one time.

## How do I cover the stitches?

- To cover the stitches, increase the slit in the foam catheter pad to cover both stitches.

## Will the catheter leak?

- The catheter may leak in the first 2 weeks.
- If it continues to leak after the first 2 weeks, call your doctor.

## What is the normal color of the fluid?

The fluid from your drain may be yellow, green, or look like blood. The fluid may have blood in it at any time. It is normal to see blood clots or tissue when you drain the catheter.

## Call your doctor **right away** if you have any of the following problems:

- Catheter drainage increases or decreases by a large amount from the last time you drained the catheter
- Catheter drainage is less than 50 mL
- There is no drainage from the catheter
- Shortness of breath that does not get better when you drain your catheter

- Redness, swelling, tenderness or warmth where your catheter exits your skin
- Fluid leaks where tube exits your skin
- Pain that gets worse and not relieved by pain medicine
- Fever of 100.4 F (38 degrees Celsius) or higher
- Drainage changes in color or becomes thick
- Drainage is cloudy or smells bad
- If skin becomes irritated under your dressing

## **Home Care and Supplies**

Call the doctor's office if you have any of the following problems:

- Unable to get your supplies
- The home care company has not called within 2 to 3 days after you had the PleurX drainage catheter put in your chest.

## **Is there a video to show me how to drain the catheter?**

You may find it helpful to view this video on draining this type of catheter.

<https://www.bd.com/en-us/products-and-solutions/products/product-families/pleurx-pleural-catheter-system/pleurx-patient-resources>