

# Caring for Your PleurX Drainage Catheter at Home

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You will need to use and care for your PleurX drainage catheter at home. A nurse will teach you about this care. A family member or friend may need to help you care for the catheter at home. A home care nurse may be arranged to help you manage your catheter at home if needed.

When you leave the hospital, you will be sent home with two (2) PleurX drainage kits. You need to drain the fluid from your chest:

- ☐ Every 24 to 48 hours
- ☐ As directed by your doctor \_\_\_\_\_

## How to Drain Your PleurX Catheter

To drain the fluid, you will connect the catheter to a vacuum bottle. The vacuum bottle pulls the fluid out of your chest. It is possible to drain up to 1 liter (1000 ml) each day. Your doctor will tell you how much fluid you should drain and what the drainage should look like.

### Follow these steps to drain the catheter:

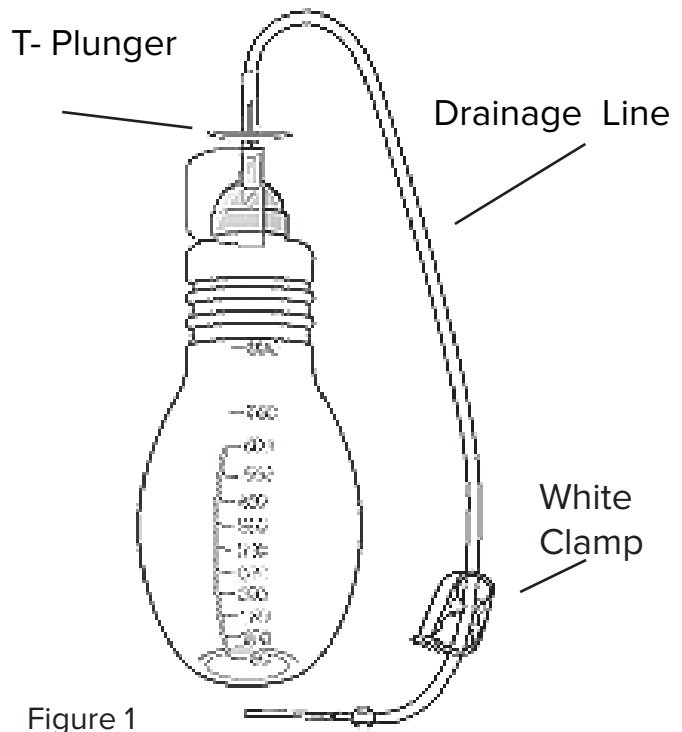
1. Get your drainage kit which includes:
  - A vacuum bottle (500 ml or 1,000 ml) with a drainage line.
  - A blue PleurX Procedure Pack, which has a clear adhesive dressing, a foam pad, gauze, a valve replacement cap, gloves and alcohol wipes.

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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.**

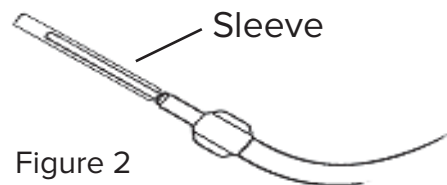
2. Set up a clean workspace that is big enough for your supplies.
3. Wash your hands well with soap and warm water. Rinse and dry.
4. Remove the old dressing that covers the catheter. Check for redness, swelling or fluid leaking around the catheter. **If you see any of these changes, finish draining the fluid and then call your doctor.**
5. Wash your hands again with soap and warm water. Rinse and dry.
6. Open the drainage kit bag and remove the blue pack.

7. Open the bag with the blue pack. Set the clear adhesive dressing to the side. Put the blue pack on a clean flat workspace with the folded side up. Carefully unfold the blue sterile paper. **Be careful not to touch anything inside the pack.**
8. Open the bag for the bottle and drainage line. Set the bottle on the table next to the blue paper (Figure 1).



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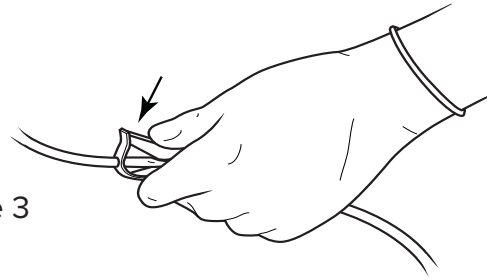
9. Check to make sure the tip of the drainage line has a plastic sleeve (Figure 2). If the sleeve has fallen off, start again with a new drainage kit.



10. Remove the paper from the drainage line and uncoil the tubing. Put the tip of the drainage line on the blue sterile paper.
11. **Put on the gloves.** Pick up one glove by the wrist and put it on the opposite hand. Pick up the second glove by the wrist and place it on the other hand.
12. Open the package with the valve replacement cap and let the cap fall onto the blue sterile paper.

13. Tear open the alcohol pads and leave them in their package. Lay them on the blue paper.
14. Squeeze the clamp on the drainage line completely closed (Figure 3).

Figure 3



## Steps to Connect the Drainage Bottle

1. Remove the plastic sleeve from the tip of the drainage line. Set the tip back on the blue sterile paper.
2. Twist and take off the white valve cap from the catheter connected to your body (Figure 4).
3. Keep holding the catheter line and throw away the cap.
4. Use an alcohol pad to clean around the valve opening. **Do not to let anything touch the end of the catheter after it has been cleaned.**
5. Pick up the bottle drainage line and put the tip into the clean catheter valve. You may hear and feel a “click” when they lock together. Only put the drainage line into the catheter. Other items can damage the valve (Figure 5).

Figure 4

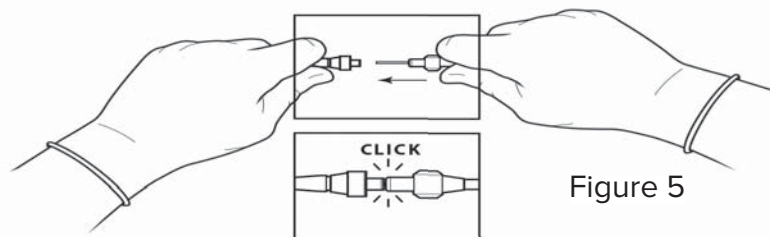
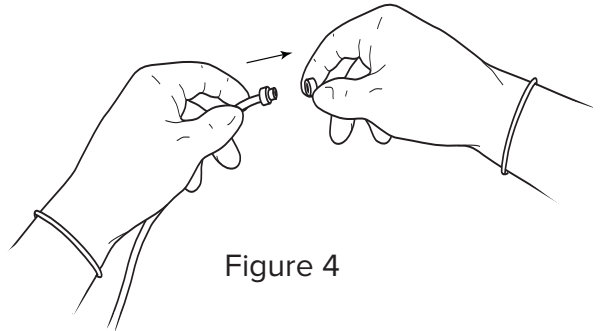
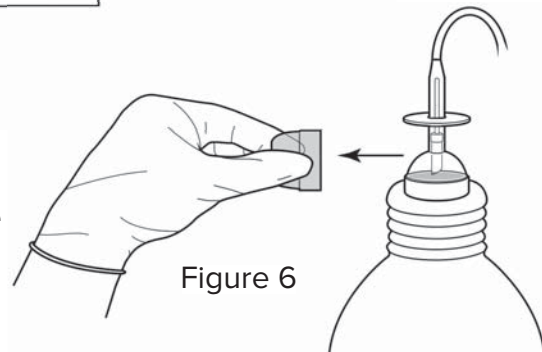


Figure 5

## How to Drain the Fluid

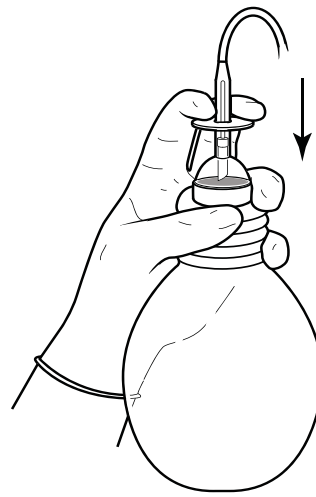
1. Remove the support clip from the top of the drainage bottle. Hold the clip and pull it away from the bottle (Figure 6).

Figure 6



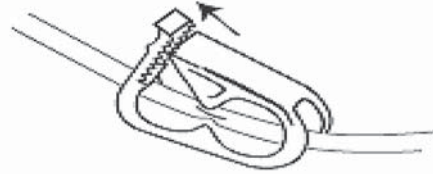
2. Hold the bottle with one hand while you push down on the white T-plunger to puncture the foil seal. This will start the vacuum action in the bottle (Figure 7).

Figure 7



3. Slowly release the clamp on the drainage line. You will see fluid flow into the drainage bottle. You can slow the flow by squeezing the clamp almost closed (Figure 8).

Figure 8



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**Important: If you feel pain, slow down or stop the flow of drainage. If you still have pain, call your doctor.**

4. When the flow of drainage stops or the bottle is full, clamp the catheter tubing until it is completely closed.
5. When you are done draining, pull the tip of the drainage line out of the valve (Figure 9). Set the drainage line down, but keep holding the catheter line in one hand.

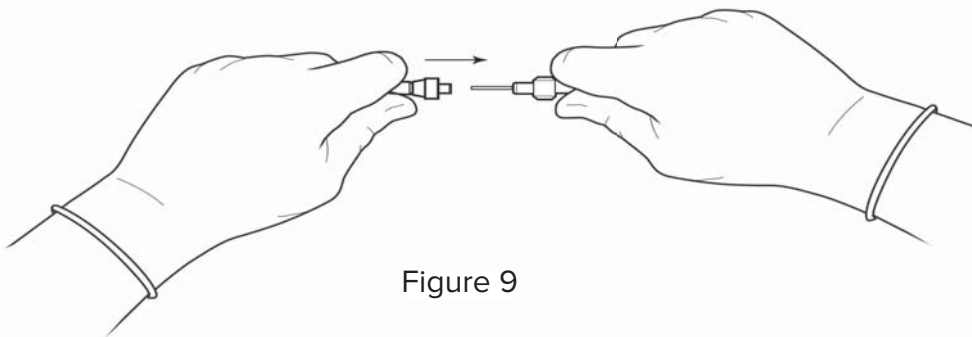


Figure 9

If you are using a 500 ml bottle and have been instructed to drain more than 500 ml and the first bottle is full, have your helper open another drainage kit and repeat the steps to connect a new bottle. **Do not drain more than 1000 ml of fluid from your chest.**

6. Clean around the catheter valve opening with a new alcohol pad.
7. Pick up the new valve cap but do not touch the inside. Put the new cap on the catheter valve and twist it clockwise until it clicks and locks (Figure 10).

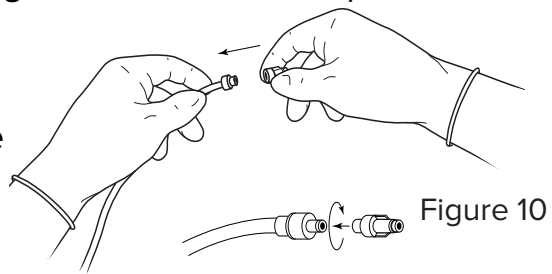


Figure 10

## How to put on a New Dressing

1. Use a new alcohol pad to clean the skin around where the catheter comes out of your chest.
2. Place the foam catheter pad around the catheter (Figure 11).
3. Wind the catheter in loops and place it on the foam pad. Put the gauze pad over the catheter and foam pad.
4. Take off the gloves and throw them away.
5. Take the clear adhesive dressing and peel away the paper backing from one side (Figure 12).
6. Center the dressing over the gauze pad. Press it down and let the end of the catheter stick out from under the dressing. Peel the other half of the paper away from the dressing and press it down (Figure 13).
7. The dressing will be shiny and stiff. There is a top cover that should be removed. Start at a corner and carefully pull the shiny cover back and peel it off (Figure 14).
8. Smooth and press the dressing down to make sure it is completely secure.
9. Wash your hands well with soap and water. Rinse and dry.
10. Write down the amount and color of the drainage on your drainage log sheet.

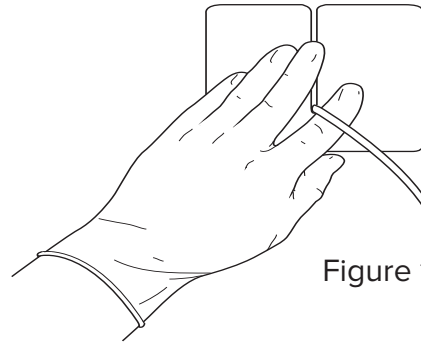


Figure 11

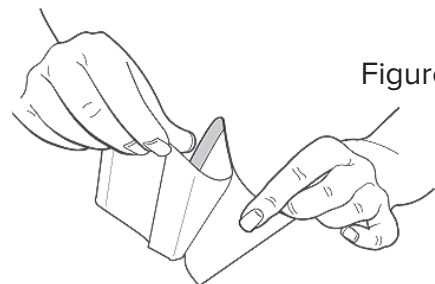


Figure 12

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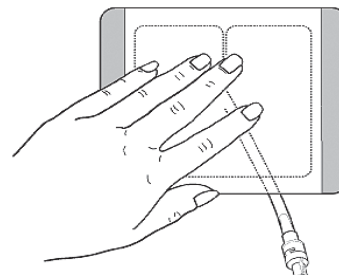


Figure 13

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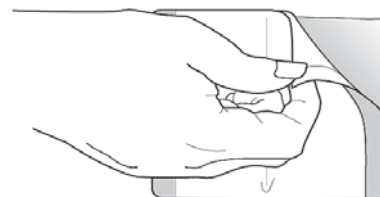


Figure 14

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## How to Empty the Drainage Bottle

1. Make sure the clamp on the drainage bottle is closed tight.  
Remove the top part of the bottle by pulling up on the soft plastic piece.
2. Empty the drainage into the toilet. Put the drainage bottle and tubing in a plastic bag. Close the bag tight with a twist-tie or Zip lock.  
Throw it away with your household trash **(Do not put the bottle in a recycling bin)**.

## Special Care Instructions

- **Change your dressing right away if it gets wet.** Clean and dry the site then put on a new dressing.
- **Do not** let the catheter soak under water, such as a bath tub, a hot tub or swimming pool.
- **Do not** use sharp objects like scissors or a razor near your catheter.

**If your catheter is damaged, cut, or broken, do these steps:**

1. Pinch the catheter closed between your fingers.
2. Slip the blue slide clamp over the catheter and tighten the clamp (the blue slide clamp is in the procedure pack). If you do not have a slide clamp, bend the catheter and tape the catheter closed.
3. **Call your doctor right away.**

## Commonly Asked Questions

### How long will I have the catheter in place?

The length of time you have the catheter will depend on how much fluid builds up. Over time, the fluid may decrease. If this happens, your doctor may want to remove your catheter.

### What should I do if no fluid drains out of my chest into the bottle?

There are many reasons why this can happen including:

- No fluid in your chest to drain.
- A problem with the catheter, bottle, or drainage line.
- The bottle may have lost its suction.

If no fluid drains, check to see if:

- The T-plunger on top of the bottle is pushed down.
- There are no kinks in the drainage line.
- The clamp on the drainage line is open.
- The drainage line and catheter valve are connected.
- The catheter is clogged.

**Other tips:**

- Roll the catheter in between your fingers to free any material or clogs that may keep the fluid from draining.
- If the bottle has lost its vacuum, repeat the drainage procedure with a new drainage kit and bottle.
- If you still have no fluid draining, there may be no extra fluid in your chest. Over time, the amount of fluid in your chest may decrease.

**When to Call the Doctor**

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

- A fever of 100.4° Fahrenheit (38° degrees Celsius) or higher
- Shortness of breath or chest pain
- Drainage changes in color or becomes thick
- Drainage is cloudy or smells bad
- The amount of fluid draining from your chest changes
- Pain that gets worse and not relieved by pain medicine
- Redness, swelling, tenderness or warmth around where the catheter exits your skin
- Fluid leaks where the tube exits your skin
- Catheter line falls out of your chest

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