

**Interventional Radiology  
Patient Discharge Education  
Tunneled Drainage Catheter (Aspira, Pleurex, etc)**

**Why do I need a tunneled drainage catheter?**

A tunneled catheter is placed to allow for frequent drainage of recurrent fluid around the lungs or in the abdomen. There are many reasons for recurrent fluid accumulation around the lungs and in the abdomen, but some common reasons are: Cancer, Liver disease, Heart disease

**Why is it "tunneled"?**

Tunneling the catheter just under the skin surface before it goes into the space that needs to be drained decreases your infection risk. Your body creates a seal around the tube and makes it difficult for bacteria to get into the space where the end of the catheters is located. Your infection risk is much lower with a tunneled catheter than frequent paracenteses or thoracenteses.

**What do I need to do to care for my tube and drain the fluid?**

**Aspira Catheter**

There is a video online at: [http://www.myaspira.com/pat\\_drain\\_video.php](http://www.myaspira.com/pat_drain_video.php)

If you have difficulty typing this into your web browser, go to [www.myaspira.com](http://www.myaspira.com), click on "Patients" at the top of the page, click on "Maintenance and Care", and then "Drainage Video". There is a Spanish version as well.

**Pleurex Catheter**

There is a video online at: [http://www.denverbio.com/Pleurx\\_drainage\\_video.html](http://www.denverbio.com/Pleurx_drainage_video.html)

If you have difficulty typing this into your web browser, go to [www.denverbio.com](http://www.denverbio.com), click "Patient Information" at the top of the page, scroll down and click on either "Pleurex Pleural Catheter" or "Pleurex Peritoneal Catheter" (depending on which one you have. Pleural is for lungs, Peritoneal is for abdomen), and then "Drainage Video" on the right.

**If you do not have either of these types of tubes, you have a simple drainage catheter.** The information on both of the above websites regarding site care would apply to you, but the drainage bags will be different. How to use the drainage bags should have been shown to you before you left the hospital. If you did not get instruction, please call us at 650-736-9081.

**\*\*If you do not have internet access or feel you need more care instruction, please call Stanford Interventional Radiology and we will coordinate your teaching\*\***

**How do I get drainage bags?**

**Aspira**

You will be sent home from the hospital with 5 drainage bags and 5 dressing kits.

The hospital will be sending a card to the company and will send you 20 more of each to your home within 1 week. If you do not receive these, please call Stanford Interventional Radiology.

After you use those 25 kits, more will need to be ordered. Please call the company at (866) 443-3471 and have your insurance and doctor's information handy. They will take care of sending more to your house. If you have difficulties, please call Stanford Interventional Radiology.

### **Pleurex**

You will be sent home from the hospital with a few drainage kits and this is usually coordinated by your inpatient nurse and case manager.

Following this, you may order more drainage kits by calling (800) 321-0591. They will ask you for your insurance and doctor's information. If you would like to get a written prescription from your doctor, please go to the patient information section at [www.denverbio.com](http://www.denverbio.com). There is a pdf document that you can print and ask your doctor to complete and sign.

### **Other "Pigtail" Type Drain**

These drainage bags use gravity only to drain. Those used here at Stanford are from Merit Medical, Drainage Depot Ref # MDD600, but any drainage bag with a leuc lock connection will work. There are some websites below that we know carry the bags used at Stanford.

1. <http://www.medicalsupplieshop.com/product.cfm/hurl/Drainage-depot-w-clear-600ml-bagtwist-drain-valv.html>

2. [http://www.greatmedicalsupplies.com/supply~Merit+Medical+\(NT\)~DRAINAGE-DEPOT-W-CLEAR-600ML-BAGTWIST-DRAIN-VALV-MDD600.htm](http://www.greatmedicalsupplies.com/supply~Merit+Medical+(NT)~DRAINAGE-DEPOT-W-CLEAR-600ML-BAGTWIST-DRAIN-VALV-MDD600.htm)

### **How can I get more help for the care of my tube?**

Depending on your insurance coverage, home health or nursing may be an option if you find taking care of this tube at home difficult for you and your caregivers. Please call your primary doctor or Interventional Radiology if you are overwhelmed by the care required by your catheter.

### **Bathing & Wound Care:**

- You may shower after 24 hours; do not tub bath or submerge in water while your tube is in place.
- If the drainage site(s) become red, tender, swollen, or start to drain, contact us.
- Change the dressing every 3-5 days or with each drainage.

### **For Patients Who Have Received Conscious Sedation**

- You must have someone drive you home when you leave the hospital. It is also good to have a responsible adult stay with you the first night.
- For 24 hours after your procedure, do not do anything where you need to be mentally alert. This includes making important decisions, operating machinery, signing important papers, etc.
- Eat light for the first 24 hours, and then start eating more as you are able. Drink plenty of fluids.
- If you are taking pain medications:
  - Take as directed.
  - Do not drink alcohol while taking narcotic pain medication.
  - Do not drive until you know how your pain medication affects you mentally.
  - If you are constipated, drink more fluids and eat more fiber. You can also use an over-the-counter stool softener.

**Follow-up visit information**

Call your liver doctor or primary care doctor after discharge for a follow-up appointment if you don't already have one. Follow up with Interventional Radiology is not routinely necessary.

**When to Get Medical and Emergency Help:**

Call our RN triage line at 650-736-9081:

Temperature greater than 101 degrees.

Increasing or new pain at the location of the drainage tube.

You see redness or swelling around the area where the tube enters the body

Drainage around the tube

Your previous symptoms are returning, but you cannot get any fluid to drain.

Go to your nearest Emergency Room:

You have shaking chills or a temperature over 102°F

**Interventional Radiology Contact Information**

*Office Hours 8:00 am - 4:30 pm*

**Post procedure questions and RN Triage:**

Phone: **650-736-9081**

Fax: 650-736-7734

Email: *irprocedure@stanfordmed.org* – non urgent concerns only

**For all After Hours Urgent/Emergent issues:**

Call the Stanford Page Operator: **650-723-6661**

*Ask for the IR MD ON Call (pager # 27237)*