

Postoperative Drain Instruction Sheet

- After surgery, a drain will be placed near your incision to collect any blood accumulation from surgery.
- You will likely go home after surgery with a drain.
- Prior to discharge from the hospital, your nurse will instruct you on how to empty and remove the drain at home.
- The hospital should provide you with necessary supplies: cup, gauze, and tape.
- You should empty the drain every 8 hours: morning, afternoon, and night.
- You should remove the drain as follows:

If surgery is on:	Remove the drain in AM on:
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	Friday
Wednesday	Saturday
Thursday	Sunday
Friday	Monday



Drain Removal Instructions:

- Empty the drain and leave cap open. In a seated position, remove the white tape and dressing over the drain insertion site.
- Gently holding the drain tube close to the skin, steadily pull the drain to remove and discard the drain and dressing. The drain tubing may be inserted 4-8 inches under the skin.
- Using a gauze dressing, apply a small amount of pressure to the drain site to collect any residual drainage, if needed. Tape a new gauze dressing over the drain site
- Leave the dressing on for 24 hours. If no drainage, you may remove the dressing and shower.
- Lumbar and posterior cervical surgery: Leave the waterproof dressing covering your incision on for 7 days. Leave the incision open to air. Steri-strips stay in place for 2 weeks unless they fall off on their own.
- Anterior cervical surgery: The white dressing may be removed on post op day 3. Leave incision open to air. Steri-strips stay in place for 2 weeks unless they fall off on their own.