

CALL AN AMBULANCE on 000 and state you have a CHEST DRAIN if any of the following occur:

- You become increasingly breathless
- You notice a leak in the connection
- If the drain falls out, apply pressure to the wound and call the ambulance
- If the tube becomes blocked
- If the tube becomes disconnected from the drainage device and you are unable to reconnect it.

Less urgent: Please use the contacts below if any of the following occur:

- If you notice an increase in pain
- If you develop a temperature
- If the tube becomes disconnected from the drainage device and you manage to reconnect it.

The Community Nurse: (07) 4433 9933

OR

The Clinics Nurse: (07) 4433 3739

OR

Your GP _____

Out of hours

Cardiac Ward Shift Coordinator (Shifty):

(07) 4433 3579

The Townsville Hospital
PO Box 670, Townsville Qld 4810
Ph: 07 4433 1111

Published by Townsville Hospital and Health Service
www.health.qld.gov.au/townsville

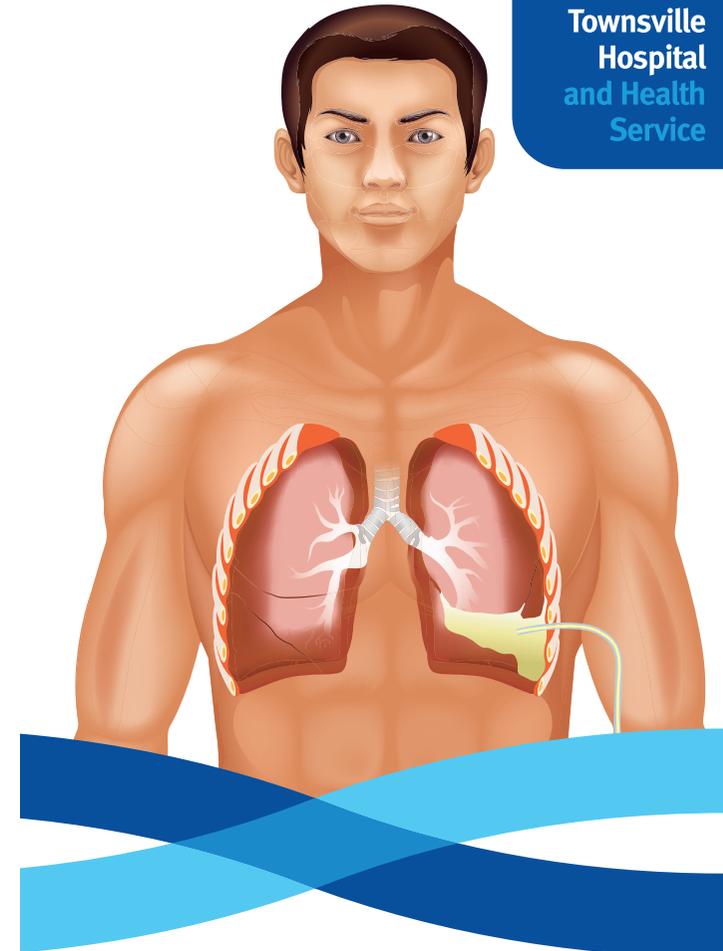


This publication has been reviewed and approved by Townsville HHS health consumers.



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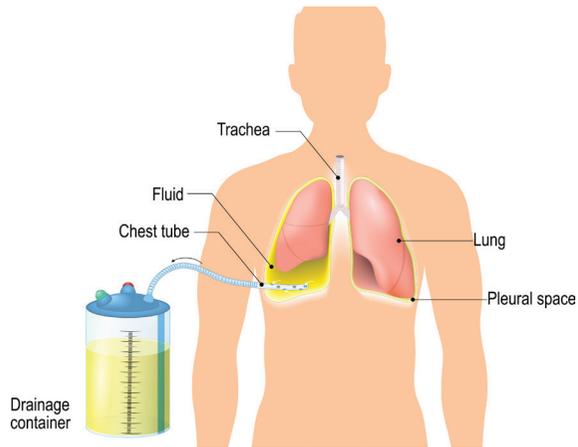
Chest Drain

Information for patients and carers of
patients going home with a chest drain.



Why has this drain been inserted?

A chest drain is inserted to assist in draining air or fluid from around the lung (pleural) cavity.



Why is the drain still in when I am leaving hospital?

Sometimes patients are well enough to leave hospital but there is still air and/or fluids that need to be drained from the lung cavity. In these situations you can leave the hospital with the drain still inserted until the air and fluid finish draining.

Sleeping with a chest drain

While you sleep try to ensure that the valve is not blocked. If you have a bag try to hang it over the side of the bed rather than taking it into bed with you.

Chest drain devices

Portex Bag

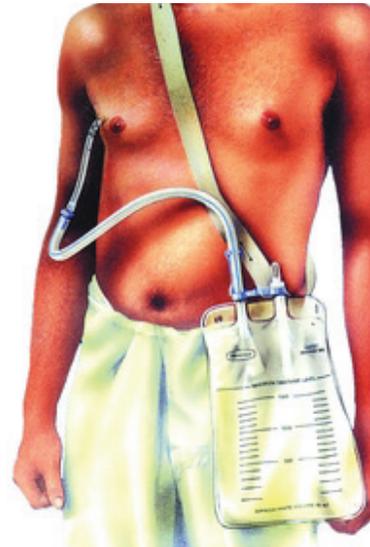


Image Source: <http://www.gpsupplies.com/chest-drainage-kit>

A **portex bag** is used to drain fluid from the chest. It has a one way valve which allows air to escape but not re-enter the chest.

- It can be worn with a strap as seen in the picture
- It must always be kept below the level of the chest to allow it to drain
- Never turn the bag upside down as this will allow fluid to leak out of the one way valve and can compromise it's function
- If fluid has leaked from the one way valve or the bag is more than half full you will need to call the community nurse to change the bag.

Pneumostat



A **pneumostat** is used to allow air to drain from the chest but only allows for minimal fluid drain. It has a small chamber to collect fluids and a one way valve to allow air to escape.

- It can be clipped to your clothes
- It must remain below your chest to allow air to escape
- A syringe can be used to drain the fluid from the chamber if it becomes full
- If the chamber fills up to the top more than three times a day please contact the community nurse.

Who will monitor the drain outside of the hospital?

The community nurse will visit everyday, redress your drain site every two days and change the drainage device when required.

You will have a **weekly** appointment with the Cardiothoracic Surgeon. You will be given a spare device on discharge. Please keep this with you at all times including when you attend your appointment.