

# Caring for Your Drain

This information sheet provides everything you need to care for your drain at home. The oncology nurse will review this information with you before your discharge.

## What is a Drain ?

A drain, also known as a Romo Vac Wound Closure Suction Set, is a medical device used to remove fluids from your surgical site.

- It consists of a bellows-like plastic chamber connected to a tube.
- The tube is inserted near your incision.
- There is a stopper on the tube, close to the chamber.

## How do you measure the output ?

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Close the stopper on the drain.
- Disconnect the tube from the chamber.
- Allow the chamber to decompress (open).
- Measure the fluid output using the markings on the side or base of the chamber.
- Empty the chamber.



## How do you Recharge the Drain ?

- Keep the stopper closed
- Compress the chamber with the help of a relative or friend.
- Connect the tube back to the chamber.
- Open the stopper to create gentle suction.



This gentle suction helps drain the fluid that collects under your incision. The chamber should always remain compressed and flat unless you are emptying the drain.

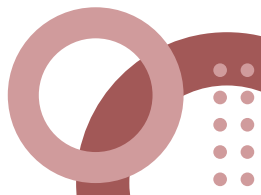
- Never clean the inside of the chamber with soap and water.
- Keep your insertion site clean and dry by washing it with soap and water.

## How long will you have your Drain?

The duration depends on the type of surgery and the amount of drain output.

The drain is usually removed when the total drainage is adequately low for three consecutive days.

When you visit your surgeon, bring the drain output records you have kept at home.



# Problems you may encounter with your drain :

## **FAQ 1: The Chamber is Not Compressed**

Reason:

- Chamber not compressed tightly, a crack, stopper not closed, or tube pulled out.

Action:

- Compress the bulb as instructed. If still decompressed, notify your surgeon's clinic.

## **FAQ 2: The Tube Falls Out**

Reason:

- Tube accidentally pulled out, rare due to stitches.

Action:

- Place a new bandage or sanitary napkin over the site and call your surgeon's clinic.

## **FAQ 3: Redness, Swelling, or Pus**

Reason:

- Infection or inflammation.

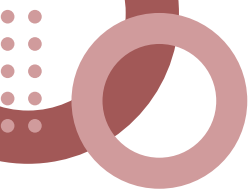
Action:

- Take your temperature. If 100°F or higher, call your surgeon and describe the signs of infection.

## **FAQ 4: Leak from Insertion Site**

Action:

- For minor leaks, apply a sanitary napkin or cotton pad. For major or blood-stained leaks, apply a sanitary napkin and call your surgeon.



**Call your surgeon immediately if you have:**

- **Bright red drain output**
- **A temperature of 101°F (38°C) or higher**
- **A large area of redness or pus at your insertion site**

**Call your surgeon's clinic during business hours if:**

- **The amount of drainage suddenly drops or the drain is leaking a few drops at the insertion site**
- **The tube falls out**
- **You cannot compress the bulb**

These are general instructions applicable to all breast cancer patients. If indicated, the surgeon will give you instructions specific to you.