

# Jackson-Pratt (JP) Bulb Post-Operative Instructions

## What supplies do I need to buy before the procedure?

- Split Drain Sponge
- Gauze pad
- Q-tips®
- Hydrogen Peroxide 3%
- Tylenol® (acetaminophen)
- Ice Packs:
  - You may make some at home, please see the handout “How do I make an Ice Pack?” or visit <http://careguides.med.umich.edu> and search “How do I Make an Ice Pack?”
  - If you purchase them, buy the gel variety and make sure they are lightweight)

## How should I prepare for surgery?

- Stop smoking cigarettes 6 weeks before surgery.
- Stop chewing tobacco 4 weeks before surgery.
- No alcohol 24 hours before surgery.

## Why do I have this JP drain?

A JP drain will prevent seromas. A **seroma** is fluid trapped underneath the skin. The drain allows the fluid to empty into the bulb instead of accumulating underneath the skin.



Image showing proper JP drain setup (drain compressed to allow gentle suction) with tubing pinned to shirt.

## What are my post-operative instructions?

### General guidelines:

- If you have IV anesthesia you will need someone to drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Follow a balanced diet.
- Exercising less may lead to constipation, so you may want to add raw fruit to your diet, and drink more fluids.
- Even when not taking pain medications, avoid alcohol for 3 weeks after surgery. Alcohol causes fluid to build-up in your body.
- Do not smoke. Smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

### Medications:

- You can take Tylenol<sup>®</sup> (acetaminophen) as needed for the pain.
- **If you receive a narcotic (opioid) pain medication:**
  - Take it as prescribed with food to avoid upset stomach.
  - Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin, unless approved by your surgeon.
  - **Do not** take opioid pain medication at the same time as Tylenol (acetaminophen) because most narcotics also contain acetaminophen. It is important that you **do not exceed 4g (4000mg) of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period.**
    - If you have a liver condition it may be less than 4g, follow your provider's instructions.
  - Do not drink alcoholic beverages, operate machinery, or drive a car while taking narcotic(opioid) pain medications.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these supplements as tolerated.

### **What should my activity level be?**

- Start walking as soon as possible. This helps reduce swelling, lowers the chance of blood clots and pneumonia and lowers the risk of constipation.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any prescribed pain medications (narcotics/opioids).
- In general, it is okay to return to work in **5-7 days**, though please follow any individualized restrictions that your surgeon discusses with you
- Avoid the following for **2 weeks** after surgery:
  - Lifting heavy objects (over 10 pounds)
  - Bending at the waist
- Avoid activities that raise your blood pressure such as vigorous sports that can cause overheating for **2 weeks**.
- Avoid swimming, hot tubs, and saunas for **3 weeks**

### **Other instructions for 24-48 hours after surgery:**

- You may shower 24 hours after surgery. (Incision may get wet in the shower but do not constantly have the shower water run directly on the incision.)
- Keep your head elevated with 2-3 pillows while sleeping for the first 2 nights after surgery. You may want to sleep in a recliner.
- Use ice packs the first 48 hours after surgery to decrease swelling. (please refer to ice pack handout on page 1.)

### **How do I take care of my insertion site?**

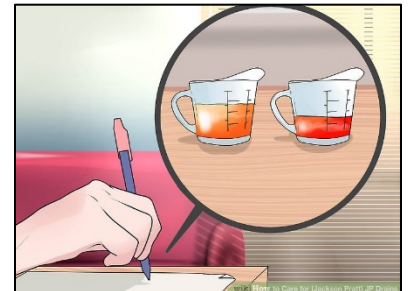
- Wash your hands before you perform drain care.
- **Strip the tubing** 3 times a day (more often if there are a lot of blood clots) by following these instructions:
  1. Grasp the tubing close to the body with one hand and pull it toward the body.

2. With the other hand grasp tubing below the first hand. Using an alcohol swab, pinch tubing tightly, sliding the fingers down the tubing, away from body. Be sure that drainage is flowing into the bulbs.

- **Measure the drainage** in the bulb by either using the numbers on the side of the bulb, or by emptying the bulb into a small measuring container 3 times a day if it is full (more often if there is a lot of drainage or it feels heavy). Follow these instructions:



1. Open the stopper on top of bulb. Pour drainage into container.
2. Squeeze bulb and hold while closing the stopper. Bulb should be collapsed when drained fully.
3. Use a safety pin to attach the bulb to clothing so the weight will not pull on the insertion site.
4. Record the amount in the diary on page 7 each time you empty the bulb. Hold container at eye level to read the numbers on the side of the container. Read the numbers in the "ml" column.



- **Cleanse the insertion site** twice per day:

1. Wet a Q-tip with a mixture of half peroxide and half water.
2. Gently roll the Q-tip around the tube and then apply Vaseline.
3. Apply a clean drain sponge daily around insertion site. Use bandage tape to secure the drain sponge. Change more often if heavily soiled.



## How long will I have this JP bulb for?

You will have this bulb removed about 1-2 days after surgery, unless it has to stay in longer.

## **How do I care for the area once the JP bulb is removed?**

- Remove the dressing (if one was placed at the time of drain removal) after 24 hours. You may have some drainage from the area over the next 2-3 days.
- Twice a day cleanse the area:
  1. Wet a Q-tip with a mixture of half peroxide and half water.
  2. Gently roll the Q-tip over the area and then apply Vaseline.
  3. Cover the area with a gauze that is secured on by the bandage tape.
- Typically, the area will seal up after 3 days. Then you can cleanse the area with soap and water once a day.
- It is okay to shower and get the drain site wet 24 hours after the drain is removed.

## **What are my care instructions after the incision is healed?**

- Once the incision is totally closed, healed and pink (about 3 weeks after surgery date) it is ok to use make-up and sunblock.
- Do not use any essential oils on incision.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock if sun exposure is unavoidable. (SPF 50 or greater).

## **When should I call my doctor?**

**Call your doctor if you notice any of the symptoms below:**

- Increased swelling or bruising.
- Worsening swelling and redness that persist after a few days.
- Increased redness along the incision.
- Severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- Any side effects to medications including:
  - Rash
  - Headache
  - Diarrhea
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting

- Oral temperature over 101 degrees.
- Yellowish or greenish liquid from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- Bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- Loss of feeling or motion.

**In the event of life-threatening bleeding, call 911 or go to the emergency department.**

### **What is the contact information?**

- Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm:
  - Call: (734) 432-7634 for patients of Dr. Brenner, Dr. Moyer, Dr. Rudy and fellow
  - Call (734) 998-6082 for patients of Dr. Stucken
  - Call: (734) 615-8838 for patients of Dr. Joseph and Dr. Kim
- After hours and on weekends:
  - Call Hospital Paging at (734) 936-6267 and ask for the ENT Doctor on call.

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