



Internally Draining Percutaneous Transhepatic Catheter (PTC) or Biliary tube Discharge Instructions

What are my care Instructions?

Dressing changes

- Change dressing every 1-2 days or after taking a shower.
- Wash your hands.
- Remove the old dressing and clean around the tube daily with a clean, single use washcloth, using mild liquid soap and water.
- Rinse well.
- Pat dry.
- Apply new, clean dressing, be careful to position tube so that it does not kink.

Follow-up care

- Tubes are usually changed every 4-6 weeks.
- If for some reason you did not receive an appointment card on discharge from the hospital, please call our office at 734-936-4536, Option 1 to schedule your tube change.

Flushing

Some tubes need to be flushed daily.

- To flush your PTC tube use 10cc syringe filled with normal saline.
- Connect syringe to end of tube.
- Push 10cc of normal saline into the tube as fast as possible without causing discomfort.
- Do not pull back on syringe.

How will I care for myself at home?

Showering and bathing

- Avoid hot tubs and swimming
- Do not allow the puncture site to be under water as this may lead to the development of infection.

Showering during the first 14 days after placement of the tube

- Before taking a shower, cover the dressing with a double layer of plastic wrap (also called Saran Wrap) and tape edges to skin.
- After the shower, remove plastic wrap and change dressing.

Showering after the site is healed or after two weeks

- You may shower without the dressing or plastic wrap using soap and water. Rinse well. Pat the area dry and apply a clean, dry, dressing.
- You can sit in a bathtub if you prefer, but the water level must be **well below where the tube enters your skin** (puncture site).

Activity

- Avoid any activity that causes a pulling sensation or pain around the tube, or kinking of the tube.
- Avoid activities such as bending forward or lifting heavy objects as this may result in bile leaking around the tube.

Diet

- You can eat your normal diet. If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, toast and yogurt
- Drink plenty of fluids (unless your doctor tells you not to).

Medications

- You can take your normal prescription medicines as your doctor has instructed you to do.

- If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine for your pain.

When should I call for help?

Call the Interventional Radiology at 734-936-4536, option 1 between 8am and 5pm Monday through Friday if you have any of the following:

- **The tube falls out.** It must be replaced within 12-24 hours. Cover the hole in the skin with gauze pads and tape.
- chills
- fever (greater than 100.6°F)
- dark urine and light colored stool
- leakage of bile around the tube and onto your skin requiring several dressing changes in a day.
- jaundice or if have yellow skin
- difficulty flushing the tube or a leak around the tube when flushing

After hours you can call the Interventional Radiologist on call at 734-936-6267.

Call 911 anytime you think you need emergency care. For example, you need to call if:

- You have shortness of breath
- You have chest pains
- You passed out (lost consciousness)

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