

Flushing Your Drain

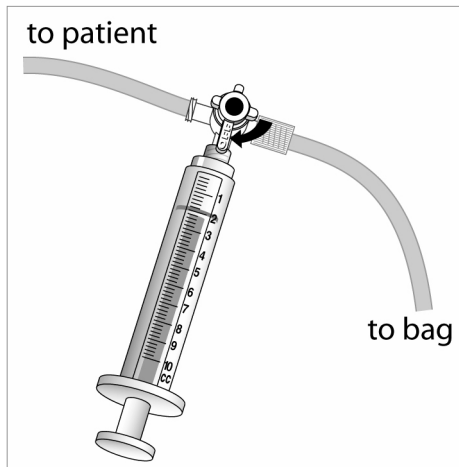
Your doctor may ask you to flush your drainage tube. In some cases, flushing the tube can help keep it from getting clogged or help it drain more fluid. You will use sterile normal saline (salt water) to do this. Your doctor will tell you how much normal saline to use and how often to flush.

Flush with _____ milliliters of saline _____ times each day.

Supplies

Sterile 10 mL normal saline syringe

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water. Dry with a clean towel.
2. Unscrew the blue cap on the stopcock valve that connects to your drainage tube.



3. Take the white cap off the syringe and screw the syringe on to the stopcock.
4. There is a lever on the stopcock. Turn the lever so that it points toward your drainage bag and away from your body.

5. Slowly push the plunger of the syringe to inject the saline into the tube going into your body. You may have a cool feeling while you are doing this. **You should not have to force the saline in. If it does not go in easily, call Interventional Radiology and you will be told what to do.**
6. Turn the stopcock lever so that it points back up to the syringe.
7. Unscrew the syringe and place a new blue cap on the stopcock.

When to Call

- Leaking around the tube
- Pain with flushing
- Trouble flushing the tube or you feel resistance
- New redness, swelling or foul-smelling drainage around the tube site
- Any questions or concerns

Who to Call

Interventional Radiology, Monday – Friday, 8:00 am- 4:30 pm: **(608) 263-9729**, option #3. Ask to leave a message for the Interventional Radiology nurse.

After hours, call **(608) 262-2122**. This will give you the paging operator. Ask for the Interventional Radiology Resident on call. Give the operator your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

The toll-free number is: **1-800-323-8942**.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 10/2019. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5721.