

# Jackson-Pratt (JP) Drain Care

## What is a Jackson-Pratt (JP) drain?

This drain is a special tube that keeps body fluid from collecting near the site of your child's surgery. The drain uses suction to pull the fluid into a bulb.

## Why does my child need a drain?

Keeping the fluids out will help keep the swelling down. This will help the area to heal faster. Drains are normally left in for several days or until the drainage slows way down.

## How do I care for a JP drain?

There are several things you will need to do when your child has a JP drain. You will need to:

- If you have been told to milk the tubing of the JP drain, do that. This will keep it from getting clogged.
- Empty the collection bulb and record the amount of fluid in the bulb.
- Squeeze the bulb flat and replace the plug. This helps the suction work.
- Change the dressing and clean the drain site. This will keep the drain site clean and free of infection.
- Keep the JP drain secure so it does not get pulled out.



## Milk the tubing of the JP drain

These steps will help you move clots through the tubing and help the flow of drainage. Do this before you empty and measure the drainage. Work from tube from the skin out to the bulb.

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Dry them well.
2. If you have been taught to milk the drain:
  - a. Use your thumb and first (fore) finger to pinch the tubing close to where the drain comes out of the skin. Hold the tube tight. This will keep it from pulling out
  - b. With the thumb and forefinger of your other hand, pinch the tubing right next to your other fingers. Keep these fingers pinched and slide them along the tubing; away from the body and toward the bulb. If there is still tubing between the fingers of your lower hand and the bulb, keep the lower fingers (closest to the bulb) pinched. Release your upper fingers. Pinch the tubing right next to the fingers that are closest to the bulb. Slide them along the tubing as far as they will reach. Repeat until you reach the bulb. You may want to use alcohol swabs to help your fingers slide down the tubing easier.
  - c. Repeat steps 2 and 3 as needed to push clots from the tubing into the bulb. If you are not able to move a clot into the bulb, call your doctor's office.
3. The fluid may leak around the drain site if a clot is blocking the drainage flow. If there is fluid in the bulb and no leakage at the site, then the drain is working even if there seems to be a clot.

## Empty the JP drain

You will need to empty the drain in the morning and in the evening.

1. Wash your hands well with soap and water.
2. Pull the plug out of the bulb.
3. Pour the fluid inside the bulb into a measuring cup.
4. Clean the plug with alcohol. Then squeeze the bulb flat. While the bulb is flat, put the plug back into the bulb. The bulb should stay flat after it is plugged so that the vacuum suction can restart. If you can't squeeze the bulb flat and plug it at the same time, use a hard, flat surface, like a table, to help you press the bulb flat while you re-plug it.
5. Measure how much fluid was collected. Write the amount, and the date and time you collected it, on the JP drainage chart at the end of this document.
6. Flush the fluid down the toilet.
7. Wash your hands.

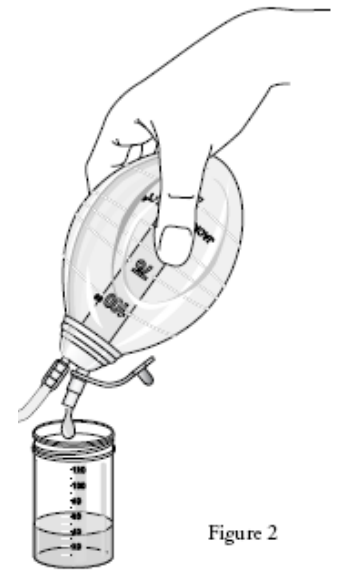


Figure 2

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## Change the dressing of the JP drain

1. Gather supplies:
  - 2x2 gauze.
  - normal saline.
  - tape or tegaderm.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Remove dressing gently. Be careful not to pull on the drain.
4. Cleanse site with normal saline and gauze. Dry site.
5. Look at the site for swelling or drainage.
6. Put on a new dressing.
7. Pin the drain to the clothing so that it is not pulling.

**ALERT:** Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if:

- **Your child has a fever of 101° F (38.3° C) or higher.**
- **The drain site gets redder, more tender or swollen.**
- **There is a sudden change in the amount or color of drainage.**
- **The drain falls out.**
- **You cannot squeeze the bulb.**
- **Your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.**

## JP Drainage Chart

Date	Time	JP drain # 1 Amount	JP drain # 2 Amount

**This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.**