

Penrose drain care

What is a Penrose drain?

This drain is a tube that keeps body fluid from collecting near the site of your child's surgery. The Penrose allows fluid to drain out of the body.

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. Your child's healthcare provider will decide when the drain should come out.



How do I care for a Penrose drain?

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

- Change the dressing and clean the drain site. This will help keep the drain site clean and free of infection.
- Be very careful so the drain does not get pulled out.

Change the dressing of the Penrose 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 drain.
4. Clean the site with normal saline and gauze. (Your child may be able to take a bath or shower and wash the area with soap and water when the Penrose drain is in place. You will be told if it is OK to do so.)
5. Look at the site for swelling or drainage.
6. Put on a new dressing.

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 more red, tender or swollen.
- There is a sudden change in the amount of drainage (more or less).
- The drain falls out or gets pulled out.
- Your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

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.