Drain Care Instructions

The wound drain assists in healing by preventing fluid collection. The recommendations below will assist you in the management of your drain at home. If you had reconstruction, please contact your plastic surgeon for drain care instructions and removal.
Do not ever disconnect the drain bulb from the tubing or place anything inside the bulb. Do not rinse the drain with any type of fluid.

Drain Care Steps:

1. Wash your hands before and after you handle the drain fluid.
2. Obtain a measuring cup to collect the fluid. Many times this will be given to you by the hospital.
3. Unfasten the bulb from your clothing or dressing
4. Remove the stopper from the top of the bulb
5. Turn the bulb upside down over the measuring cup and empty all of the fluid into the cup.
6. Using one hand squeeze most of the air from the bulb, us the other hand to replace the stopper. This is very important and should be done each time.
7. Fasten the bulb to your clothing or place in the pocket of your mastectomy bra.
8. Write down the amount of the fluid that was emptied on the following chart. If there are two drains, write the amounts separately for each drain. Record date and time drains were emptied.
9. Empty the measuring cup and discard the fluid. Wash the measuring cup with soap and water.
10. Empty the fluid from the bulb whenever it appears to be about half full. You may notice the fluid range in color from red to yellow.
11. Because drains will occasionally clot, it is important to "milk" the drain each time that you empty the bulb. This is done by pinching the tubing with your fingers at the top and as close to the skin surface as possible. With your fingers pinched, slide your other thumb and fore finger along the length of the tubing. The tubing may compress flat, and open up gradually. Sliding your fingers along the tubing is easier by moistening your fingers, or by using a wet tissue or alcohol swab.
12. The drain can be removed when the total drainage for 24 hours is less than 30cc (or mL) for two consecutive days for each drain. You may empty the bulb as often as needed throughout the day, but the total amount over 24 hours is important.
13. Please call your surgeons office when you think your drain is ready to be removed.

Date	Time	Drain #1	Drain #2