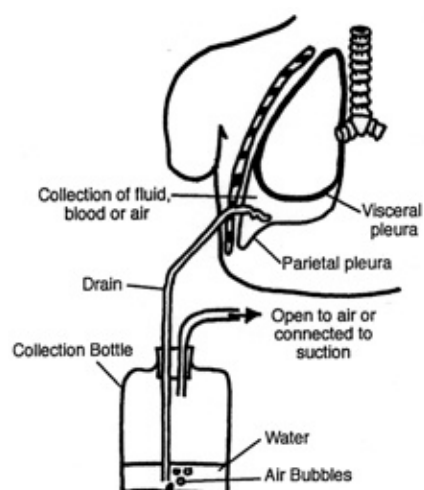


## Child health information factsheet

### Chest drain

A chest drain is a tube inserted between the ribs into the chest cavity (space), which is used to drain fluid, pus, blood or air from the inside of the chest cavity.

This may be needed because of an infection or an injury, such as a fall or a traffic accident.



#### Inserting a chest drain

Your child will go to theatre and have a general anaesthetic (medicine given to make you go to sleep). The doctor will then put the chest drain in.

A small hole is made in the skin, and the drain tube is inserted between the ribs. To stop the drain falling out, a stitch is used to hold the tube in place and a dressing will be placed over the entry site.

#### Following the procedure

The end of the chest drain tube will be connected to a collecting bottle. An x-ray will be done to check the chest tube is in the right position. This will be done before your child comes back to the ward.

When they are back on the ward they will be watched closely.

The collection bottle may be attached to a suction machine to encourage drainage. The nurse will explain this to you if it is needed for your child.

Having a chest drain can be painful. To keep your child comfortable they will be given regular pain relief, if you think your child is uncomfortable let the nurses know.

The nurses will watch your child closely while the drain is in, but there are some useful points that might be helpful for you to know.

# Child health information factsheet

- Your child will be encouraged to get up and sit in a chair or walk around
- Be careful not to catch the drain tubing on anything
- Never lift the drain above waist level this is dangerous. If you are unsure about your child moving, ask a nurse for help
- When the drain is on the floor, be careful not to knock it over. If this happens, stand it up and let a nurse know
- If the drain becomes disconnected from the bottle, alert a nurse at once. Pinch or fold the tube over until someone can come and reconnect it to the bottle.

## General points

- The nurse will check the amount drained into the bottle regularly and record it
- The nurse will check the wound site regularly. It is quite normal for the skin to look red
- Your doctor will decide how long the drain needs to stay in
- A physiotherapist will do breathing exercises with your child
- The doctor will listen to your child's chest to check on how you child is and may want an x-ray to check the drain is working
- While you are on the ward your doctor or nurse will be happy to discuss any other questions you may have about your child's care. Please ask.

## Risks

You will need to sign a consent form for your child to have this procedure, as with all procedures and anaesthetics there are risks. These will all be explained to you before you sign the form.

## If you have any questions or concerns please contact

G4 surgery ward: **023 8079 6718**

**If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8079 4688 for help.**