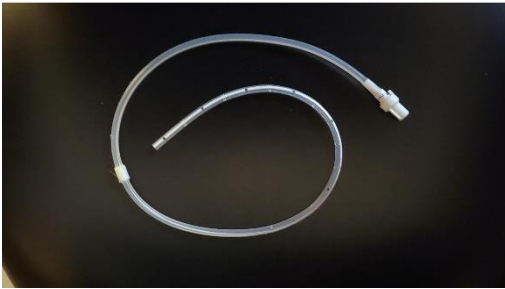


Having a PleurX™ Drainage Catheter Inserted

This handout offers information on a PleurX™ catheter and what you need to know before having it inserted.

What is a PleurX™ drainage catheter?

A PleurX™ drainage catheter is soft silicone rubber tube inserted (put) under the skin in your chest and into the space around your lung. This drainage catheter allows the buildup of fluid to drain out before it becomes uncomfortable for you. It will be inserted by a respirologist at the Durham Regional Cancer Centre. This is a picture of a PleurX™ drainage catheter:



What is a pleural effusion?

A pleural effusion is the buildup of fluid between your lungs and your chest wall. This buildup of fluid may make you feel short of breath (have difficulty breathing).

Preparing to have a PleurX™ drainage catheter inserted

- If you take a blood thinning medication
You may need to have bloodwork done before your drainage catheter is inserted. The results of this bloodwork helps the doctor decide if you need to stop your blood thinning medication before your drainage catheter is inserted. Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about this.
- You will be told if you need a chest x-ray. The chest x-ray will show the respirologist how much fluid is around your lungs.
- You will be referred to Ontario Health atHome for the care of your drainage catheter at home.

Before your PleurX™ drainage catheter is inserted

- It is helpful to have someone come with you to this appointment.
- Bring a list of the medications you are taking.
- The respirologist and nurse will tell you how a drainage catheter is inserted and answer your questions. You need to sign a consent form.
- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and lay down on a stretcher.
- The respirologist will use an ultrasound machine to see how much fluid is around your lungs.
- You will meet with a care coordinator from Ontario Health atHome to plan for a visiting nurse to see you in your home.

Having a PleurX™ drainage catheter inserted

- You will be awake when the drainage catheter is inserted.
- Your skin will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution in the area where the drainage catheter is inserted. This same area will be numbed with an injection of an anaesthetic medication. You will feel the needle stick and then some mild burning. This needle has medication in it to freeze the area so you do not feel pain when the drainage catheter is inserted.
- Your drainage catheter will be put in through a small incision into your skin and into the space around your lung. A second small incision will be made where the drainage catheter is inserted. Your drainage catheter will be kept in place with stitches. The stitches will be taken out when the area is healed in about 10 to 14 days. A waterproof dressing will be put on over the small incisions. A label with the contact information for the Thoracic Diagnostic Assessment (DAP) Program will be placed on the waterproof dressing.

After your PleurX™ drainage catheter is inserted

- You will have a chest x-ray after the drainage catheter is inserted. The respirologist will look at your x-ray before you leave the hospital.
- You may feel tired after your drainage catheter is put in. You may want to plan for someone to drive you home from the hospital.

After you go home

- Rest for the remainder of the day.
- It is normal to have a small amount of pain or discomfort. You may take an over the counter pain medication if needed (examples: acetaminophen or another pain medication you normally take).
- You can have a shower the day after your drainage catheter is inserted.
- Call your visiting nurse if the dressing becomes loose or the gauze pads underneath the waterproof dressing get wet.
- 24-hour support is available from the Thoracic DAP Program if your visiting nurse has a question or concern about your care. The thoracic nurse navigator is available 8 am to 4 pm from Monday to Friday (except on holidays). A respirologist or a thoracic surgeon is available after hours and as needed.

Frequently asked questions

Question: When will the visiting nurse see me in my home?

Answer: A visiting nurse from Ontario Health atHome will come to your home the day after your drainage catheter is inserted. The visiting nurse will drain the drainage catheter as ordered by the respirologist. This will be about 2 to 3 times a week. Call the visiting nurse if you feel short of breath (have difficulty breathing) at any time. The visiting nurse may call the Thoracic DAP Program if there are any questions about your care.

Question: How long will the drainage catheter need to stay in?

Answer: The drainage catheter usually stays in until the fluid stops draining. This is different for everyone. It may need to stay in for weeks or even months.

Question: When should I call the visiting nurse?

Answer: Call the visiting nurse if you have:

- New or worsening pain in your chest
- Bleeding that soaks through the dressing over your drainage catheter site
- A fever above 38.3° C/100.9°F at any time or above 38.0° C/100.4°F for more than an hour
- Shakes and chills (with or without a fever)
- A new cough or your cough is getting worse.
- Any new shortness of breath or your shortness of breath is getting worse.
- A dressing that comes loose or the gauze pads are wet.
- Any questions or concerns about your drainage catheter.

Go to the Emergency Department at the hospital closest to you if:

- You have a sudden increase in your shortness of breath.
- Your drainage catheter comes out or becomes damaged in any way.

Let your visiting nurse know you are going to the Emergency Department. Take your PleurX™ access kit with you to the hospital.

Important phone numbers

Thoracic DAP Program

Call 1-877-291-5956 or 905-576-8711 extension 32743.

Ontario Health atHome

The name of your care coordinator: _____

Call 1-800-263-3877 at extension: _____

The name of your visiting nurse _____

Call _____

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