

ASCENSION ST VINCENTS

SUPERFICIAL DRAINAGE PATIENT HANDOUT

Radiologist who performed your procedure:

Procedure Description:

- An image-guided drainage is a procedure used to treat a fluid collection or pocket of pus (abscess) in the body. During the procedure, a radiologist uses imaging to precisely target the fluid collection. The skin is cleaned with antiseptic, and local anesthetic is used to numb the area. A small needle or small drainage tube (catheter) is inserted into the fluid collection. The fluid is then drained out. For smaller collections, a needle may be used to drain the fluid without leaving a catheter in place. For larger collections, a drainage catheter may be left in place for several days to allow more fluid to drain. A portion of the drainage catheter will be fixed to the outside of the body using a suture.
- A sample of the fluid is usually sent to the laboratory for testing.
- The procedure itself usually takes 15-30 minutes.

Benefits:

- Minimally invasive: The procedure uses small needles/catheters without the need for traditional surgery.
- Diagnostic value: A fluid sample is often sent to the laboratory for testing.
- Quick relief of symptoms: The procedure helps reduce pain, swelling and tenderness caused by fluid or infection.
- Low risk of complications: The risk of serious complications is low, with most side effects being mild and temporary.
- Rapid recovery: Most patients return to normal activities soon after the procedure.

Risks & Potential Complications:

- Pain: Pain is relatively common. The pain is usually mild and can be managed with over-the-counter pain medicine.
- Bleeding: Minor bleeding/bruising can occur. Significant bleeding requiring medical treatment is rare (less than 1% of cases).
- Infection: Infection is rare (less than 0.2% of cases). Most infections are mild and can be treated with antibiotics.
- Vasovagal reaction: Feeling faint or lightheaded can occur during or after the procedure (up to 7% of cases).
- Internal injury: Injury to nearby structures (organs, larger blood vessels or nerves) can occur (up to 3% of cases).
- Allergic reaction: A reaction to the local anesthetic, topical antiseptic or other medications is rare (less than 1% of cases).
- Vasovagal reaction: Feeling faint or lightheaded can occur during or after the procedure.

Alternatives:

- Antibiotics alone: Antibiotics may be tried without fluid removal or drain placement. This approach is less effective with larger fluid collections.
- Surgical drainage: A surgeon can make an incision to remove the fluid.
- Observation: Small fluid collections may occasionally resolve on their own without anything being done.

Aftercare:

- If a drainage catheter was not left in place:
 - You may remove the bandaging after 24 hours.
 - You may shower and allow water to flow over the site 24 hours after your procedure, however, do not submerge the site in water (bath, pool, hot tub or ocean) until the site has healed.
- If a drainage catheter was left in place:
 - Change the bandaging as needed and anytime the bandaging gets wet.
 - You may shower and allow water to flow over the site 24 hours after your procedure, however, do not submerge the site in water (bath, pool, hot tub or ocean) until the drain has been removed, and the site has healed.
 - You may receive instructions to inject 10 mL of sterile saline into the catheter every 12 hours to keep the catheter from clogging up.
 - Record the volume of fluid draining from the catheter (output) every 24 hours. Contact your ordering clinician once the output drops to less than 10 mL per 24 hours to determine if it is time for the catheter to be removed.
- Do not apply lotion/ointment to the site until it has healed unless instructed to do so.
- Avoid strenuous physical activity for at least 24 hours. Then increase your activity level as tolerated.
- It is normal to experience mild pain and bruising after your procedure. You can take acetaminophen (Tylenol), aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) for relief. It is safe to take aspirin, ibuprofen or naproxen soon after your procedure, however you may experience more bruising if you do so.
- Contact Radiology or your ordering provider if you have any concerns or experience any of the following: persistent or significant bleeding, significant swelling, severe pain not responding to over-the-counter medications, signs of possible infection (significant redness or purulent drainage at the site, severe pain, fever or chills) or drainage from around the catheter. Call 911 in the event of an emergency.
- Weekdays 8 am to 5 pm call 308-5488 (Riverside), 296-4277 (Southside), 602-1219 (Clay) or 691-1286 (St Johns). Weekdays 5 pm to 10 pm or weekends 6 am to 10 pm call 308-8401. If outside of these hours, call the hospital operator at 308-7300 and ask to speak to the Interventional Radiologist on call.

How Do I Receive Procedure Results?

- Some drainage procedures produce samples which are sent to the laboratory for testing. Results can take up to 5 days (sometimes longer) to become available. Please contact your clinician's office to obtain results and for follow-up instructions.