

Drain Placement (P.A.W.S.)

Call your child's regular doctor or P.A.W.S. 314.454.7297 NOW (night or day) if your child:

- The drain comes out.
- Has increased pain to the wound.
- Has increased redness or swelling around the wound.
- Has an increase in drainage or needs a bandage change more than 4 times per day.
- Is less than 3 months old and has a temperature over 100.3°F (38°C).
- Has a temperature over 101° F (38.4°C).
- Looks or acts very sick.
- Is limp or very weak.
- Cries uncontrollably for more than an hour.
- Is an infant and has no wet diapers in 8 hours.
- Has no urine in 12 hours at any age.
- Is crying without tears.
- Is dizzy.
- Seems more sleepy than usual.
- Has a dry mouth or cracked lips.

A drain is a soft tube that is put in your child's wound.

It helps prevent drainage from being trapped in the wound by letting it to flow out to the bandage. The drain also lets the cut stay open as the wound begins to heal.

Drains come in many colors and sizes. Your child's medical provider will decide where to put the drain and what size to use.

What will it look like?

- Two small openings in the skin with either a straw-like or rubber-band like loop. The drain will be held in place with a stitch or a knot.
- While your child is in the hospital the drain will be covered with gauze and a clear bandage. A small to medium amount of drainage on the outer bandage is normal.

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How do I care for my child's drain?

- Every child's wound is different.
- Your child may have a drain for a few days or up to 2 to 3 weeks.
- The outer bandage needs to be changed at least once a day.
- The nurse will show you what supplies are needed to change the bandage.

Dressing Care

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Take off the old bandage. Make sure to leave the drain in place.
3. Put your child in the bathtub or shower. Never leave him or her alone.
4. Let warm water rinse the wound.
5. Clean your child with a mild, unscented soap.
6. When the bath is done, pat the body dry. Make sure to dry the wound area last.
7. Cover the wound with a new, dry bandage.
8. Wash your hands with soap and water.

For General Health Information and Resources:

Call or visit the [Family Resource Center](#), a health information library on the 3rd floor of the hospital. Call 314.454.2350, email at frc@bjc.org, or check out the FREE [St. Louis Children's Hospital Kid Care App](#).

