

Respiratory medicine

Ambulatory pneumothorax management

Information for patients going home with a Cook® Chest Drain Valve

Introduction

Please read this leaflet along with the pneumothorax patient information leaflet. Your doctors feel you are now ready to go home, but you still need a chest drain to help expand your lung. This leaflet explains what a chest drain is and how to look after it at home.

What is a Cook® Chest Drain Valve?

Your chest tube is a flexible tube that's placed between your ribs. It goes into your pleural space, which is the area between the inner and outer linings of your lungs. A Cook® valve is a small plastic device which connects to your chest tube and regulates one-way passage of air out of your pleural space to allow your lung to expand fully.

Why do I need it?

Your doctors are concerned that the puncture (hole) in your lung is not fully healed. The valve allows air to escape out of your chest and stops the build-up of air around the lung, which can be dangerous. When the puncture has healed, you will no longer need the device. Your doctors will check regularly if you still need the device.

How do I look after my drain?

We will put in your chest drain using stitches and a plastic dressing. The Cook® valve is connected to the end of the drain. You have to keep the area around your chest drain clean and dry. If you feel the site is dirty (with blood or pus) please ring the pleural team on 07876138418 / 07393003019 and they will make an appointment to see you.

Any symptoms you still have should continue to improve.

However, if your symptoms get worse, or your chest drain becomes dislodged or falls out, you need to go to A&E straight away. This could mean the pneumothorax is getting larger (this is uncommon).

Your Cook® valve should be connected to your chest tube at all times. It might also be attached to a small yellow container at the other end.

If the Cook® valve gets disconnected from the chest tube, follow these steps to reconnect it right away, then call the pleural team using the numbers below. You would have been shown these steps before you left hospital as well.

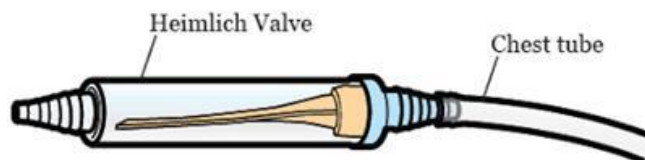


Image courtesy of Cook Medical

- Push the blue end of the valve into the end of your chest tube. Make sure it's in the chest tube tightly.
- Cough deeply a few times. This will help get rid of any extra air that may have built up around your lung while your valve was disconnected.
- If the clear end of the valve is connected to a small yellow plastic container, make sure the container is also pushed on tightly, and the container is screwed onto the yellow base properly, and that the other yellow port is not blocked by anything.
- If your drain is connected to a small yellow container, you can empty this if it fills with liquid. Wash your hands and simply unscrew the clear container from the yellow screw top and pour the liquid down the toilet and reattach the container again.



Routine enquiries: how to contact the respiratory team

The pleural team will arrange to see you in the next 24 to 72 hours to review the chest drain. It is likely that they will ask you to have a chest x-ray before your appointment.

If you don't have the details of your appointment or if you have any questions or concerns before your follow-up appointment, please ring the pleural team on **07876138418 / 07393003019** or email imperial.pleural@nhs.net. The pleural team's working hours are **09.00 to 17.00 Monday to Friday**.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at

imperial.pals@nhs.net. The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

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