

# Indwelling pleural drainage system explained

## Respiratory Medicine Patient Information Leaflet

### Introduction

This leaflet is about the procedure to fit an indwelling drainage system. It tells you what the system is, how it is inserted, its benefits and possible problems that may occur.

We hope it will answer some of the questions that you or those who care for you may have at this time. It is not meant to replace discussion between you and your doctor, but as a guide to be used along with what is discussed.

### What is an indwelling pleural drainage system?

It is a thin tube (catheter) that is inserted into your chest to drain fluid out of your lungs.

## What are the benefits?

It allows you to drain fluid from around your lungs easily and painlessly whenever it is needed, at home. You can do this at times that suit you, so you can manage fluid build-up before it becomes too uncomfortable.

It avoids the need for repeated injections and chest tubes every time the fluid needs to be drained. The drainage can be performed either by you on your own or with the help of a nurse, whichever is easier for you.

The system is a soft, flexible tube that is thinner than a pencil which remains inside the chest and passes out through the skin. There is a clamp on the outer end of the system to prevent fluid leaking out.

## Why do I need an indwelling pleural drainage system?

The reason your doctor has recommended this drainage system is for a build-up of fluid around your lungs, which can cause difficulties with breathing. This is known medically as **pleural effusion**.

## What does the drainage system consist of?

- Drainage catheter
- Drainage collection bottles
- Protective dressing

## How is the catheter inserted?

We will give you a date and time to come to hospital for the procedure. It is carried out on the GI Unit or on Ward C5.

For the procedure the doctor will:

- Ask you to lie down on your side, in a comfortable position.
- Use an ultrasound scan to locate a suitable position for the catheter.
- Clean the area to make sure it is sterile.
- Give you an injection of local anaesthetic to numb the area where the catheter will be inserted.

- Insert the catheter into your chest between the linings of your lung.
- Secure the catheter with two stitches.
- Put a protective dressing on to secure the outer part of the catheter to your body.

If there are no complications, you will be able to return home shortly after the procedure.

## **How does the drainage system work?**

When you need to drain fluid, you connect the end of the drainage catheter to the drainage line on a collection bottle. Then you release the clamp.

When you have drained enough fluid out (no more than 1,000ml at a time), close the clamp and disconnect the drainage line and bottle. It takes about five to 15 minutes to drain the fluid.

We will give you three packs – each containing a drainage bottle and dressing. You can get more from your district nurse by contacting your GP practice.

## **What are the risks of the procedure?**

All surgical procedures have some risks. Inserting the drainage catheter is a relatively simple and safe procedure and the doctor will explain things to you carefully before you have it. The risks are:

- When a collapsed lung is re-expanded too quickly, it can sometimes cause fluid on the lungs.
- Puncture of the lung during the procedure causing the lung to deflate.
- Infection at the insertion site.
- Low blood pressure. If the blood pressure drops too low during the procedure, it can cause the blood vessels to stop providing oxygen around the body. The medical name of this is circulatory collapse.

We will monitor you closely during the procedure to prevent these risks from occurring wherever possible.

## **What are the alternatives?**

You do not have to have this system fitted. If you prefer, you can continue to visit hospital to have the fluid removed from your lungs.

## **How will I feel after the procedure?**

Most people will get some discomfort from the catheter in the first week. We will give you painkillers to control this.

## **After care advice**

We will give you an information pack showing how to attach the drainage bottle, how to drain the fluid and general care of your catheter.

## **Can I wash and shower normally?**

Make sure that the catheter tube is completely covered by the self-adhesive dressing and is securely attached to your skin.

Do not allow the catheter to soak underwater in a tub, bath or pool.

## **What about the stitches?**

The district nurse will take out one of the stitches seven to 10 days after the procedure. The other stitch will stay in to keep the catheter in place.

## **Can I drain the fluid myself?**

Usually a district nurse will visit you at home to drain the fluid. However if you or your carer wish to learn how to drain the fluid, we will be happy to teach you.

## **How long will I have the catheter in for?**

Indwelling catheters are designed to remain in position permanently. However, sometimes the amount of fluid produced reduces or dries up and the catheter is no longer needed. In this situation, we can take out the catheter. For this procedure, you will need to come into hospital for the day only.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Ward C5 on 01384 456111 ext. 2191

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

**This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/respiratory-medicine/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email [patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru va rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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