

Using a Suction Drain

What is a suction drain?

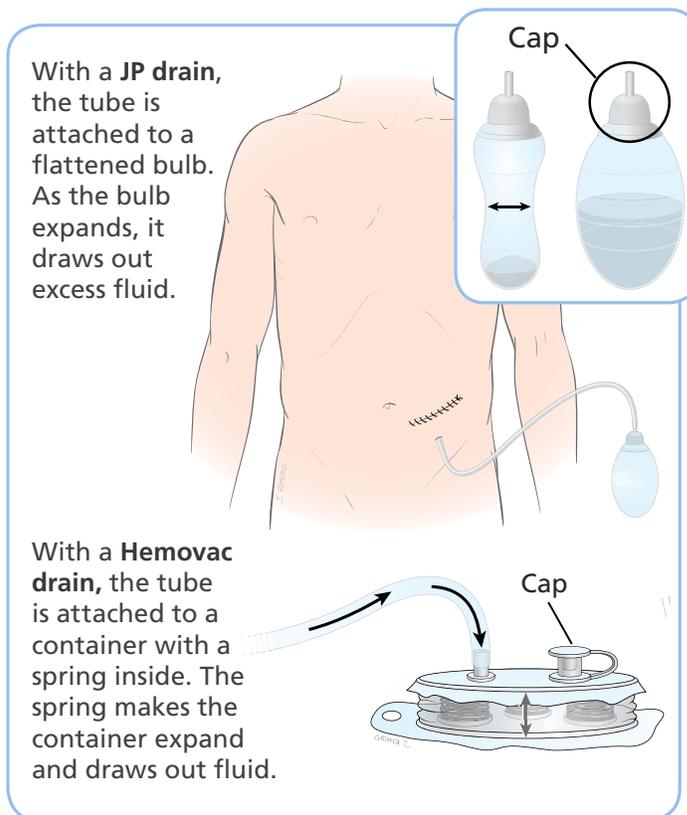
A **suction drain** is a device that gently pulls excess fluid from your body. It's used to stop fluid build up after surgery or if you have an infection.

One end of the suction drain tube is inserted in the area of your body where the fluid is building up. The other end is attached to a squeezable container that is flattened. As the container expands, it draws out the excess fluids. The suction drain will stay in place until the amount of fluid slows or stops.

Two common types of suction drains are the **JP drain** and the **Hemovac drain** (see pictures at right).

When should I check my drain?

Check the amount of fluid in the container every 2 to 4 hours. Empty it when the container is half full, or every 8 hours, whichever comes first. As you heal, you'll need to empty it less often. Follow the steps in the box below.



How do I empty my suction drain?

- 1 **Set out your supplies**, including a measuring cup, an alcohol wipe, and a pen or pencil.
- 2 **Wash your hands** with soap and water.
- 3 **Remove the cap**, or open the plug of the container. Do not touch the inside of the cap or plug.
- 4 **Pour the fluid** from the drain container into the measuring cup.
- 5 **Clean the cap** or plug of the drain with an alcohol wipe.
- 6 **Squeeze the drain container**, and hold it flat. While it's flat, put the cap or plug back on. If you can't squeeze it flat and close it at the same time, ask someone for help.
- 7 **Measure and record** how much fluid you collected. Write down the date, time, and amount of fluid. A record chart is on [page 2](#) of this fact sheet. Be sure to bring the record to your next appointment.
- 8 **Flush the fluid** down the toilet. Rinse the measuring cup. Wash your hands with soap and water.

