

Emergency Services

After a Chest Tube is Removed

You have had a chest tube in your chest to remove air from an air leak or pneumothorax.

Your most recent chest x-ray shows that the air leak has stopped and your lung has returned to normal. However, the pneumothorax could return. Also, you are now more likely to get a pneumothorax in the future.

How to take care of yourself at home

- Keep a clean, dry bandage over the site for 2 to 3 days after the tube is removed.
- Change the dressing when it gets wet or dirty.
- Continue to do your deep breathing exercises.

For your safety

- Do not fly for 14 days (2 weeks) after the chest tube is removed.
- Talk to your family doctor if any time in the future you want to take part in the following activities:
 - Scuba diving.
 - Climbing to high-altitudes.

It could be very dangerous if your lung collapsed again.

When to get help

Arrange to see your family doctor if:

- Your wound is red, draining pus (yellow or green coloured ooze), or has a bad smell coming from it.
- You have a fever over 38.5°C (101.3°F).

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if:

- You have trouble breathing.
- You have chest pain.
- You are bleeding through the bandage on your chest.

Tell the nurse and doctor in Emergency you have had a collapsed lung and chest tube in the past.

To learn more, it's good to ask:

- Your family doctor
- HealthLinkBC - call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf and hard of hearing) or go online at www.HealthLinkBC.ca.

Your chest tube was removed on: _____