Negative Pressure Wound Closure Therapy

A Portable System for Advanced Wound Healing
Negative Pressure Wound Closure Therapy

What is Negative Pressure Wound Closure Therapy?
Negative Pressure Wound Closure Therapy is a system that uses controlled negative pressure (vacuum) to help heal wounds. This machine is ordered by your doctor. Only the doctor or nurse should change the machine settings.

Home safety tips
If your home does not have 3-pronged outlets, use a 3-pronged adapter.
• Do not use extension cords with this machine.
• Keep electrical cords out of areas where people often walk across (like the kitchen).
• Do not try to service or fix this machine.
• Be careful not to spill liquids on the machine. It must stay dry.
• Do not overload your electrical outlets.
Frequently Asked Questions

What does using this therapy system feel like?
Most patients placed on this therapy tell us it has a non-painful, mild ‘pulling’ feeling that goes away after a few minutes.
The wound may get tender or itchy as it heals. This is usually a good sign. If itching or pain continues to bother you, please tell your caregiver.

Can I move around while on the therapy system?
The machine is made to let you move freely. Your doctor will tell you how much movement you can do on the arm or leg with the dressing.

Can I have a tub bath or shower while using the therapy system?
It is hard to keep the machine dry during a tub bath or shower. You should take a sponge bath instead.
How many hours a day does the therapy system need to be on?
You need to stay on the Negative Pressure Wound Closure Therapy at least 22 hours each day. If the machine is turned off for longer than 2 hours at a time, you must take the dressing off and cover your wound with a different kind of dressing that your nurse will give you. Call the VON if this happens.

What will the foam dressing look like when the therapy system is working?
The dressing will shrink down and wrinkle like a raisin.

How often does the dressing have to be changed?
The dressing will be changed 3 times a week. Your doctor or nurse will work with you to make a plan for this.

Will the therapy dressing change hurt?
Some people do feel slight pain during dressing changes. Please let your nurse know if you have pain during the dressing change.
If you are admitted to a hospital
• Bring the machine and its case to the hospital with you.
• Call VON to let them know you are in the hospital (see page 7).

What are your questions?
Please ask. We are here to help you.

Helpful tips
Every day
• Stay on the therapy system for at least 22 hours each day. You should not stop the therapy for more than 2 hours at a time.
• If the on/off button is pressed off by accident, push the same button to turn the machine back on. The machine will turn on to the correct settings and your therapy will carry on.
• The machine should be plugged in as much as possible.

Check often
☐ Is the machine on?
☐ Does the display screen read “therapy on?”
☐ Are the clamps open?
Safety tips
For your safety, the machine will alarm if any of the following happens:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Machine will alarm if:</th>
<th>Action:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canister is full</td>
<td>□ Check to see if the tubing is kinked (bent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Replace canister if full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Call Clinic or VON if machine continues to alarm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A leak is found in the dressing</td>
<td>□ Listen for a whistling sound at the dressing site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ If whistling is heard, put a layer of the plastic covering over the part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the dressing where whistling is heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Call Clinic or VON if leak continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battery is low</td>
<td>□ Recharge battery by plugging into a wall outlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other things to look for:</td>
<td>Action:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Bleeding under clear dressing, in the tubing, or in the canister | - Call doctor or nurse  
- Turn off the machine  
- Clamp and unplug the tubing between dressing and the machine  
- Apply pressure and put the arm or leg up on pillows |
| If machine is turned off for more than 2 hours               | - Call doctor or nurse  
- Remove the dressing  
- Apply dressing given to you                                      |
| If you have a fever, tenderness, redness, swelling, itching, a rash, or more warmth in the wound area | - Call doctor or nurse |
| If you are throwing up, or have an upset stomach, loose bowel movements, headache, sore throat, or dizziness | - Call doctor or nurse |
Tell your doctor or nurse right away if:

› you notice a change in the colour or make-up of the fluid – for example, if the fluid becomes bloody or cloudy
› you see more redness, or odour from the wound
› you feel more pain
› the alarm will not shut off

Important phone numbers

VON:

Clinic:

Dr. ________________________________
Office: 902-473-____________________

Resident on call: 902-473-2222 and ask for the ___________________ Resident on call
Looking for more health information?
Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides
Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.
For more information, go to http://library.novascotia.ca
Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit https://811.novascotia.ca
Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit http://ns.211.ca

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!
www.nshealth.ca

Prepared by: Orthopedic Clinic
Designed by: NSHA Library Services

The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only. The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

WE85-1221 © June 2018 Nova Scotia Health Authority
The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.