

NURSING 202 – ADVANCED CONCEPTS OF NURSING
CLASS PREP - CHEST TRAUMA: CHEST TUBES & DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

It is important for the nurse to provide competent care when the patient has a chest tube. Independently review chest tube care and answer the following questions.

1. What should be your focal assessments for a patient with a chest tube?

Vital signs, breath sounds, oxygen saturation, and resp effort. Monitoring placement and function. Ensuring the drainage system stays below the chest level. Assessing the amount and color of drainage. Assessing for kinks, occlusions, or loose connections in the tubing. Ensuring the client gets a CXR to confirm placement.

2. Define the term “tidaling”.

Tidaling is the movement of the fluid level with respirations. Expected in the water seal chamber. With spontaneous respirations, the fluid levels will rise with inspiration and will fall with expiration.

3. Why might tidaling fail to occur? Tidaling not occurring could signal lung re-expansion or an obstruction within the system.

4. Define/describe the term “bubbling”.

Small air bubbles in the chamber system.

5. What causes bubbling?

An air leak in the system. Common to see it during exhalation, sneezing, and coughing.

6. What is an acceptable safety measure regarding tubing connections for chest tubes and drainage tubing?
Routinely monitoring the tubing for kinks, occlusions, or loose connections.

7. What is the generally ordered suction pressure for a chest tube drainage system?

-20cm H₂O

8. What pressure should you set the wall suction regulator to?

Continuous

9. What type of dressing would be used for a chest tube dressing?

Occlusive dressing

10. Name 2 priority nursing diagnoses when providing care to the patient who has a chest tube.
Impaired gas exchange, risk for infection, risk for bleeding, risk for decreased cardiac output