

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?

Flucuation, output, color, air leak

2. Define the term “tidaling”.

With a chest tube in the pleural space, the water level should fluctuate in the water seal chamber. This is known as tidaling and should correspond with respiration.

3. Why might tidaling fail to occur?

the tubing is kinked or clamped, or a dependent tubing section has become filled with fluid.

4. Define/describe the term “bubbling”.

Bubbling occurs in the water seal chamber when air is entering the chest drain.

5. What causes bubbling?

air leaks.

6. What is an acceptable safety measure regarding tubing connections for chest tubes and drainage tubing?

connections should be taped. Line should be below the pts chest level even when ambulating and straight.

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

-20 cm H₂O

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

manufactures recommendation (ATI)

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

sterile dressing (ATI)

10. Name 2 priority nursing diagnoses when providing care to the patient who has a chest tube

Impaired gas exchange
Risk for infection