

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?

Focal assessment for a patient with a chest tube should be assessing for tidaling and bubbling. You should complete a respiratory assessment, assess vital signs, and pain level. You want to assess for any loose connections and always have proper supplies at the bedside.

2. Define the term “tidaling”.

The term tidaling is the normal fluctuation of the water within the water-seal chamber. The rise is with inspiration and the fall is with expiration in patients with spontaneous breathing.

3. Why might tidaling fail to occur?

Tidaling might fail to occur because the system may be blocked. This can be caused by the lungs during re-expansion or if the system is attached to suction.

4. Define/describe the term “bubbling”.

The term bubbling is normal within the collection system and it is normal at the end of an expiration with spontaneously breathing patients.

5. What causes bubbling?

Bubbling can be caused by an air leak that is in the drainage system or a leak from the patient.

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

Safety measures regarding tubing connections for chest tubes and drainage tubing include keeping the system sterile, keeping it below the site of insertion, and keeping the chambers upright.

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

The pressure for a chest tube drainage system is 20 cm H₂O.

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

The pressure you should set the wall suction regulator to should be 80-100 mmHg.

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

The best type of dressing for a chest tube is a three-way occlusive dressing.

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

Acute pain

Impaired gas exchange