

**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, comfort level, amount and color of drainage, inspection of tubing for kinks and occlusions, lung sounds, chest movement with breathing, abdominal, respiratory

2. Define the term “tidaling”.

Normal fluctuation of the water within the water seal chamber is called tidaling. The up and down movement of water in concert with respiration reflects intrapleural pressure changes during inspiration and expiration.

3. Why might tidaling fail to occur?

If tidaling stops suddenly, assess the chest tube as this may signify an occluded chest tube. As the lungs reexpands, tidaling gradually slows then eventually stops.

4. Define/describe the term “bubbling”.

Bubbling is the incoming air that is received from the pleural space, the air enters into the collection chamber and bubbles up through the water.

5. What causes bubbling?

Brisk bubbling of air often occurs in when a pneumothorax is present is first evacuated. Intermittent bubbling during exhalation, coughing, or sneezing (when the patient’s intrathoracic pressure is increased) may be seen as long as there is air in the pleural space. Eventually, as the sir leak resolves and the lung becomes more fully expanded, bubbling ceases.

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

Keep tubing free of kinks and occlusions, take steps to prevent fluid filled dependent loops, which can impede drainage. Sterile dressing changes. Keep drainage unit below

the level of the chest. Always know facility specific policy.

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

Wet Suction system - Ordered suction amount is generally 20 cm H₂O suction

Dry Suction system – ordered suction amount is generally -20 cm H₂O pressure

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

Set regulator until there is continuous gentle bubbling in the suction control chamber,

generally 80 to 120 mm HG

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

Occlusive dressing, Petroleum(airtight) gauze to prevent air leak.

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

Acute pain: related to positive pressure in pleural space and chest tube placement

Ineffective breathing pattern

Ineffective peripheral tissue perfusion