

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?
 - a. Breath sounds, SpO₂, dressing around the chest tube, subcutaneous emphysema, color and amount of drainage in the collection chamber, excessive pain/discomfort
2. Define the term “tidaling”.
 - a. Tidaling is when there are fluctuations in the water-seal chamber with breathing or respiratory effort
3. Why might tidaling fail to occur?
 - a. Tube may be kinked, clamped, fluid filled
4. Define/describe the term “bubbling”
 - a. Bubbling is a sound when air leaves the pleural space and enters the water seal chamber. Intermittent bubbling is ok because it shows that the tube is doing what it is supposed to. Continuous bubbling is when there is an air leak and the water seal chamber continuous to bubble meaning that air is constantly passing through.
5. What causes bubbling?
 - a. Air leak
6. What is an acceptable safety measure regarding tubing connections for chest tubes and drainage tubing?
 - a. Checking all tubing for kinks or occlusions, keeping the collection chamber below the level of patients chest
7. What is the generally ordered suction pressure for a chest tube drainage system?
 - a. Dry suction system

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

Negative pressure -20

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

a. Petroleum gauze

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

a. Impaired gas exchange

b. Risk for infection

c. Acute pain