

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 focused respiratory assessment: lung sounds, work of breathing, VS, SpO₂, assess chest tube system for air leaks, surrounding skin intact without erythema, dressing clean, dry, intact, patency of tubes, bubbling

2. Define the term “tidaling”.

tidaling is when the water level in the chamber rises with inhalation and falls with exhalation

3. Why might tidaling fail to occur?

it may fail when there is a problem with the patency of the tubes, so they could be occluded or clamped, or the lung may have re-expanded

4. Define/describe the term “bubbling”.

bubbling is when there are continuous, extensive bubbles in the chamber

5. What causes bubbling?

some causes include an air leak, the tubes dislodging, a loose connection, or suction set too high

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

the tubes being sutured and taped into place and the patient possibly being sedated

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

around -20 cm H₂O

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

between 80 and 120

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

a petroleum-impregnated dressing to prevent air leaks

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

Impaired gas exchange and acute pain