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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, dressing, resp. effort, breath sounds, tubing-kinks
2. Define the term "tidaling".
the fluid that shifts with respirations
3. Why might tidaling fail to occur?
obstruction or lung expansion
4. Define/describe the term "bubbling".
The water seal chamber has bubbles
5. What causes bubbling?
1) An air leak causes continuous bubbling
2) sneezing/coughing/exhalation causes spontaneous bubbling
6. What is an acceptable safety measure regarding tubing connections for chest tubes and drainage tubing?
make sure there is no kinking/obstructions and make sure the system is below the insertion site.
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?
80-100 mmHg
9. What type of dressing would be used for a chest tube dressing?
An occlusive dressing with petroleum impregnated gauze
10. Name 2 priority nursing diagnoses when providing care to the patient who has a chest tube.
1) Impaired Gas Exchange
2) Risk for infection