

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?
 - Fluctuation, output, color, and air leak
2. Define the term “tidaling”.
 - Tidaling is the rise and fall of water in the water-seal chamber with the patient's inspiration and expiration. It indicates that the system is patent and connected to the pleural space.
3. Why might tidaling fail to occur?
 - Tidaling might fail to occur when the lung has full reexpanded, tubing is kinked or clamped, there's an obstruction in the chest tube, a disconnection in the system, or the suction is too high or set incorrectly.
4. Define/describe the term “bubbling”.
 - Bubbling is the presence of air bubbles in the water-seal or suction control chamber of the drainage system.
5. What causes bubbling?
 - Bubbling is caused by a pneumothorax, an air leak, or is a normal indication of in the suction control chamber.
6. What is an acceptable safety measure regarding tubing connections for chest tubes and drainage tubing?
 - All connections should be secured with tape, ensure tubing isn't kinked, always keep drainage below level of chest.
7. What is the generally ordered suction pressure for a chest tube drainage system?
20cm H₂O
8. What pressure should you set the wall suction regulator to?
80-120mmHg
9. What type of dressing would be used for a chest tube dressing?
 - Sterile occlusive dressing, such as petroleum gauze or foam dressing, covered with sterile gauze and tape, or a pre-cut chest tube dressing. The site should remain airtight and dry.
10. Name 2 priority nursing diagnoses when providing care to the patient who has a chest tube.
 - Impaired gas exchange and risk for infection