EXIT SITE CARE: SUPPLIES

Patient/Caregiver Instructions

You will need many supplies to change the driveline exit site dressing. Prior to being discharged from the hospital, you will be given the name and number of a medical supply company that will provide you the supplies you will need. Dressing supplies can be purchased from any medical supply company or pharmacy. Once home, it will be your responsibility to order your supplies from the medical supply company provided or from a different company (or pharmacy) based on your insurance coverage. Your insurance may specify the preferred company. It is important for you to keep an inventory of your supplies and plan ahead. Please make sure you order your supplies on time and you have the supplies you need for each dressing change.

The supplies needed to change the driveline dressing should be kept in one cabinet/area. This will make it easier to gather your supplies for each dressing change and determine when some supplies are getting low.

Please notify the VAD Coordinator if there is any problem with your dressing supplies.

SUPPLIES you need for your DRIVELINE EXIT SITE DRESSING CHANGE:

**CLEAN GLOVES**
Many clean gloves will come in a single box (they are not individually wrapped). They come in 4 sizes (small, medium, large and extra large). These are worn when removing the old dressing from the driveline exit site.

**STERILE GLOVES**
Each pair of sterile gloves is individually wrapped (to keep them sterile). They come in many sizes ranging from size 6 (small hand) to size 8 (large hand). Prior to your discharge, the nurse will help you to determine which size you will need. The sterile gloves are worn when you are ‘cleaning’ the driveline exit site and applying the sterile dressing.

**MASKS**
Many masks are in a single box. The masks are not sterile and are used to cover your nose and mouth during the dressing change. The mask prevents germs that we have in our mouth and nose from being ‘breathed’ onto the driveline exit site. The patient and person changing the dressing should wear a mask. (To put on the mask: loop the elastic ends behind your ears, pinch the top of the mask snug around the bridge of your nose, and pull the bottom of the mask down under your chin.)

**GOWNS**
Each gown is individually wrapped and disposable. Several gowns are included in a single box. The person changing the driveline dressing should wear a gown (if it is the patient changing the dressing, the patient does not need to wear a gown). The gown will prevent germs that are on our clothes, or body, from falling onto the driveline exit site and sterile field. (To put on a gown: unfold the gown with minimal touching of the outer portion of the gown. Grasp the upper corners of the gown and continue to unfold it as you hold it out in front of you. Once the gown is unfolded, begin to put your arms in the sleeves, one at a time. Secure the gown at the Velcro points or ties, whichever is provided. Avoid anything touching the gown, keeping it as clean as possible.)
HATS
Many hats will come in a single box. These are not sterile and are used to cover your hair while changing the driveline exit site dressing. The person changing the dressing should wear a hat. The hat prevents germs and hairs from falling onto the driveline exit site and sterile field. When putting on the hat, please make sure all of your hair is covered.

STERILE 4 X 4 GAUZE
The gauze will be individually wrapped and are sterile. Many individually wrapped gauze will be included in a box. Please do not open the individual gauze until you are setting up your sterile field (this is described in the dressing change instructions). For each dressing change, you will need (3) 4x4 gauze. The first gauze is used to ‘clean’ (with chlorhexidine) the exit site, the second gauze is used to ‘rinse’ (with normal saline) the exit site and the third gauze is used to ‘dry’ the exit site.

STERILE DRAIN SPONGES
The drain sponges will be individually wrapped (2 sponges in each package) and are sterile. Please do not open the drain sponges until you are setting up your clean field (this is described in the dressing change instructions). The drain sponge is the dressing we use to cover the driveline exit site. For each dressing change, you will need 2 to 4 drain sponges (depending on how much drainage is coming out of the driveline exit site).

CHLORHEXIDINE SOLUTION (“HIBICLENS”)
The chlorhexidine solution (also called Hibiclens) comes in a ‘multi-use’ bottle and you will use a small amount with each dressing change. This solution (applied to a sterile 4 x 4) is used to ‘clean’ the driveline exit site during the dressing change. Once a ‘multi-use’ bottle has been opened, it MUST be thrown away after 30 days. A bottle kept longer than 30 days may have bacteria growing in it that could cause an infection at the driveline site. The bottle must be kept sterile at all times. (Do not allow anything to be put into the bottle or touch the opening). The chlorhexidine solution can be purchased from your medical supply company, as well as, any pharmacy or drug store. It does not require a prescription. **DO NOT USE any other solution or ointment unless directed by MD or VAD Coordinator.

STERILE NORMAL SALINE
The normal saline comes in small plastic (squeezable) tubes and is sterile. It is packaged in small quantities as you will only use a small amount for each dressing change. Please do not save any normal saline that is left (it is a ‘single-use’ tube and will no longer be sterile for the next dressing change). Normal saline (applied to a sterile 4 x 4) is what you will use to ‘rinse’ the chlorhexidine solution (Hibiclens) off the driveline exit site.

FOAM (or, SILK) TAPE
The foam (or, silk) tape is used to secure, or tape, the drain sponges over the driveline exit site at the end of the dressing change. It is a roll of tape and you will cut it to the length needed.
DUODERM
The duoderm is a solid gel-like dressing. Each “sheet” of duoderm is individually wrapped and many “sheets” are included in a single box. The size of the duoderm will be larger than you need and can be cut to the appropriate size (buy one pair of new clean scissors). It is used to protect the patient’s skin from being irritated by the tape used to secure the drainage sponge in place. The duoderm is sticky on one side and applied to the skin around the driveline exit site (keep the duoderm approximately 2 inches away from the driveline exit site). You will then tape onto the duoderm instead of the patient’s skin. The duoderm is changed every 1 – 2 weeks OR when it becomes soiled, causes skin irritation, or loosens up.