

# How to Care for a Wound Using V.A.C.<sup>®</sup> Therapy

## V.A.C.<sup>®</sup> Therapy

You have a wound that your doctor is treating with V.A.C.<sup>®</sup> Therapy.

V.A.C. stands for Vacuum Assisted Closure<sup>®</sup>. The system includes a foam dressing that is connected to a pump.

The foam dressing is placed in the wound and sealed with a dressing. The pump provides suction to drain fluids from the wound. This allows the edges of the wound to heal with less swelling. New tissue is better able to grow without extra fluids and germs.

The V.A.C. Therapy is attached to a small pump, which allows you the freedom to move. You will need to keep the pump on at all times. You will be able to sleep with it in place.

## What to Do if the Alarm Goes Off

The V.A.C. Therapy system has an alarm. This will alert you if the:

- canister needs to be replaced
- dressing seal is not airtight
- pump is not working right
- tubing is kinked
- battery needs to be charged.

Follow the directions included with the machine or call KCI at 1-800-275-4524 for directions.

## When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you:

- have a temperature of 101 F or higher
- have new pain or pain you can't control
- feel dizzy or lightheaded that won't stop
- have signs of infection at your incision site:
  - pain
  - swelling
  - redness
  - odor
  - warmth
  - green or yellow discharge
- are unable to get out of bed
- have nausea (upset stomach) or vomiting (throwing up) that won't stop
- have any questions or concerns.

## Whom to Call for V.A.C. Therapy Supplies and Questions

Call KCI at 1-800-275-4524 to order supplies or ask questions about V.A.C. Therapy. Be sure to place an order at least 5 days before you will need supplies.

If you have a home health care nurse, they can help you order supplies.

## How Often to Change the Dressing

You may need help from a home health care nurse, a nurse in the hospital or clinic, or from a family member. This will depend on the location of your wound and your home situation.

Change your dressing as directed by your doctor.

## How to Change the Dressing

The following are general directions. If you have questions about your health, please ask your doctor or nurse.

- Wash your hands.
- Turn off the pump.
- Remove the old dressing by peeling the clear dressing and removing the black foam.
- Wash your hands.
- Cut the foam to fit the size of your wound.

- Place the foam loosely so it fills the entire space of the wound.
- Cover the entire wound with the clear dressing. Remove the top layer of plastic.
- The dressing should cover 1 ½ inches on all sides of your skin around the wound.
- Cut a hole the size of a quarter in the clear dressing so the foam shows.
- Find the flat end of the tubing. This is the “trac pad.” Stick the trac pad to the foam through the hole in the clear dressing. Remove the top layer of plastic.
- The clear dressing provides an airtight seal. Make sure the trac pad covers the hole.
- Connect the trac pad tubing to the canister tubing\*.
- Turn on the machine and start the therapy.
- Wash your hands.

\* Change the canister once a week or if it is two-thirds full of drainage.