

## Ultrasound guided drain insertion

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio tape or computer disk, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

### What is an ultrasound guided drain insertion?

This is a procedure where a drainage device is inserted through the skin to remove fluid.

### What does it involve?

The drain is a thin, flexible plastic tube with a loop which locks by a thread on the inside. A fixation device is attached to skin with self-adhesive to help keep the tube in place.

You will be taken to the room where the procedure will be performed. The site for drain insertion will be marked on your skin. The radiology team will go through a checklist. The doctor who is performing the procedure will clean the skin and then inject some local anaesthetic to numb the skin around the area. The drain will be inserted over a wire or with an instrument called a trochar.

### Where is it done?

Your drain insertion will be done in the **X-ray/scans A** department on level 2 at the North Devon District Hospital.

You should register at the reception **30 minutes before** your appointment time, so you can be prepared for your drain insertion. You may be asked to wear a hospital gown.

### How to find us

If you come through the main hospital entrance, take the second corridor on your right (just before the coffee shop). Continue half way down the corridor and then take a left turn to the X-ray/scans A reception.

### How long will it take?

The procedure usually takes around 30 minutes.

After the procedure you will be taken to the ward. You will be observed until discharge home. The length of time you need to stay in depends on your hospital doctors. A nurse will measure your blood pressure, pulse and breathing at intervals to make sure you are not bleeding internally.

## What preparations are needed?

You may have had blood forms in the post to check your blood clotting before the drain insertion is carried out. This is to check that the blood clotting process is normal and reduces further the risk of bleeding. **If you have received these forms with your appointment letter, please arrange to have the blood tests done at your GP surgery or medical centre a few days before your appointment.**

On the day of your procedure you may need to fast, depending on the site of the drain insertion. Please take your normal medication. **Please note: if you are taking any blood thinning tablets such as warfarin, rivaroxaban, aspirin or clopidogrel, you must inform the radiology nurses as soon as possible on 01271 311869.**

## Before the test

The specialist will see you on the day of the examination. You will then be able to ask any questions or discuss any concerns that you may have.

We must by law obtain your prior written consent to any operation and some procedures. This leaflet has been written to enable you to make an informed decision in relation to agreeing to the treatment.

The doctor doing the drain insertion will explain the procedure and all the risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign a consent form. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff.

You will notice that the consent form is duplicated, allowing you to keep a copy for your records.

## How will I feel during the procedure?

The local anaesthetic may sting for a short time, but the drain insertion should be pain-free. The position in which you are asked to lie during the procedure may be uncomfortable for a short while. If you experience any pain, please alert the nursing staff and they will provide painkillers.

## How will I feel afterwards?

Bleeding from the puncture site is rare, but if there is any, press on the wound site for 10 – 20 minutes and it should stop.

If you are worried, please contact the radiology nurses on 01271 311869 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm), your GP or nearest A&E department.

We advise you to take the day following your procedure off work, particularly if your job involves lifting.

## What happens after the procedure?

**Can I go home with a drain in?** If you are well enough and your doctors think it is the best for you to go home, then district nurse visits can be arranged to allow you to go home.

**How long will the drain stay in?** The drain stays in until the fluid has drained adequately. Often the drain is left in for two days after this to help the inside to heal up and make repeat drain insertion less likely.

**Can I take a shower with the drain in?** Yes, but it is better if the drain site is kept relatively dry and dried soon afterwards.

**What happens if the drain is accidentally pulled out?** It is difficult to pull the drain out. However, you should be careful not to displace it, especially when moving around. If the drain becomes displaced, leaks or is damaged, then you should inform the hospital doctors as soon as you can or, if that is not possible, inform your GP.

## Are there any risks?

**Bleeding:** The risk of a significant bleed after a drain is low. If this occurs, you may need a blood transfusion.

**Infection:** There is a risk of introducing infection, but everything used for drain insertion is sterile.

Drains are inserted using ultrasound rather than CT for guidance as it does not use x-rays.

## Further information

For further information, please contact the X-ray/scans department on 01271 311869, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

### PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or e-mail [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust  
Raleigh Park, Barnstaple  
Devon EX31 4JB  
Tel. 01271 322577  
[www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk)

© Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust  
This leaflet was designed by the Communications Department.  
Please contact 01271 322460 to help us improve our leaflets