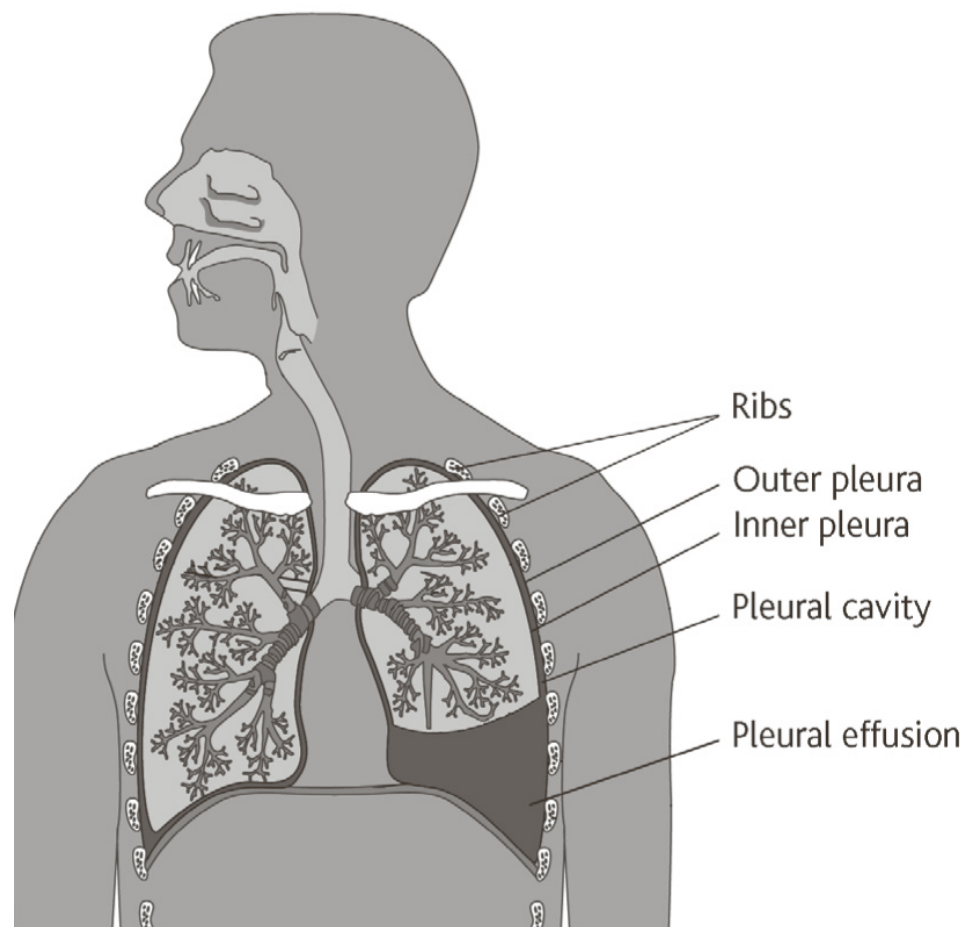


Chest Drain Insertion

Information for Patients

What is a chest drain?

The insertion of a chest drain is a sterile procedure that involves placing a small drain through your skin into the space between your lungs and rib cage (the **pleural space**) to drain the fluid that has accumulated.



Who will be doing the procedure & where?

The procedure will be carried out by a qualified doctor with a suitable level of experience. Because this is a Teaching Hospital, the doctor performing the procedure may be supervised by a senior doctor.

The procedure will take place in the procedure room in the Acute Medical Unit on Level 5 of the Thomas Kemp Tower at the Royal Sussex County Hospital.

How do I prepare?

You may be asked to have a blood test a few days before you come to hospital.

Please take any normal medicines including painkillers before you come in. If you are on blood thinning treatment such as Warfarin, Clopidogrel or injections your doctor should have arranged for these to be stopped in advance.

You may also eat and drink as normal.

Most patients will be asked to arrive in the morning and be able to leave an hour or two after the procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

You will be asked to lie down on a bed where the doctor will use an ultrasound machine to show where best to insert the drain. The ultrasound enables the doctor to 'look' through the chest wall, it is painless and non-invasive. A cool gel is used on the skin to ensure good contact for the ultrasound probe.

Your skin will be cleaned and then a local anaesthetic will be injected to numb the area. The small drain will then be inserted between the ribs in the anaesthetised area and connected to a tube and one-way bag or drainage bottle containing water. The water acts as a one way seal to allow air or fluid to drain out but not go back in to your chest. The whole procedure will usually take up to one hour.

Will it hurt?

The local anaesthetic will sting at first but it will allow the needle to be inserted without causing too much discomfort. You may feel some pushing and pulling during the procedure. Please inform the doctor if you feel any pain.

How will the drain be attached?

We sometimes use a stitch to tie the drain in and an adhesive dressing on the skin; however, please move carefully as drains can still be pulled out.

How long will the drain be in?

It depends on why you need the drain; however, your medical team will keep you informed on a regular basis.

How will the drain be removed?

This is straight forward and is usually done by the doctor or a nurse. Once all the dressings are removed the drain will be gently pulled out. You may be asked to hold your breath in a special way when this is done. It can be uncomfortable but only lasts a few seconds.

Are there any risks during the procedure?

There is a small risk of infection and bleeding but every effort is made to prevent this from happening. Air can sometimes leak into the pleural space during the procedure but this is not usually a problem and it will usually come out when the drain is in place.

Important things to know about your chest drain

You may see air bubbling out through the bottle; this is normal. Fluid will also drain from the chest; this is usually clear but sometimes may be blood stained. This is nothing to be alarmed about.

There is no need for you to be in pain but if you are in pain ask for painkillers.

The drain can come out if pulled or twisted so please take care. If the drain does come out tell someone straight away. You need to keep the drainage bottle below the level of the drain (at the point it enters the chest). Usually it is placed on the floor.

What happens afterwards?

Some people have a little pain after the procedure which may be helped by painkillers. If you have a lot of pain, difficulty breathing, or fever please tell a doctor or nurse so they can look for a cause and treat it.

Useful Contact Numbers & Website

Acute Medical Unit - 01273696955 (Ext. 3435)

District Nurses - 01273 885000

www.patient.co.uk

If you do not understand this leaflet, we can arrange for an interpreter.

إذا كنت لا تستطيع فهم محتويات هذه النشرة فبإمكاننا عمل الترتيبات لتوفير مترجم شفوي لك.

এই প্রচারপুস্তিকাটি যদি আপনি বুঝতে না পারেন, তবে আপনার জন্য আমরা একজন অনুবাদকের ব্যবস্থা করে দিতে পারি

如你不明白本單張的內容，我們可安排口譯員服務。

如你不明白本传单的内容，我们可安排口译员服务。

اگر مندرجات این جزوه را نمی‌فهمید، ما می‌توانیم مترجم در اختیارتان بگذاریم.

Jeśli masz trudności w zrozumieniu tej ulotki, możemy zorganizować tłumacza.

© Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust

Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

Ref number: 619

Publication Date: August 2014 Review Date: August 2016

