Caring for Your Drains at Home

Most body contouring patients go home with one or more drains. This guide explains what the drain does, how to look after it each day, and how Dr Kumar's nurses decide when it can come out.



What the drain does

After surgery, the body produces fluid under the skin while it heals. Dr Kumar uses soft Blake's drains: a thin, flexible tube placed under the skin, connected to a small suction bag. The suction draws the fluid out so it cannot collect under the skin, which helps the skin settle and heal.

The fluid usually starts dark red and becomes lighter over the following days, changing to pink and then to a pale, straw-coloured fluid. The amount should gradually fall.

When the drain comes out

Under 20 mL	2 days in a row	Then removed
in 24 hours, for each drain	at that level	by Dr Kumar's nurses

There is no set day for removal. Every patient drains at a different rate, so your record of the output is what tells the nurses when the drain is ready to come out. Drains are removed by Dr Kumar's nurses in his rooms, by his nurse in Orange, or by your local GP if that is easier for you.

Your drains

Completed by Dr Kumar's nurses before you go home.

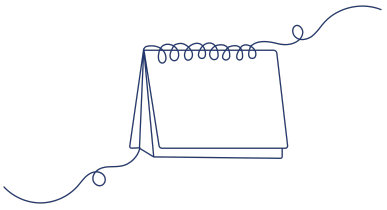
NUMBER OF DRAINS _____

WHERE _____

FIRST REVIEW _____

Every day

1. **Mark the level.** At the same time each day, draw a line on the bag at the fluid level with the Sharpie from your post-op care pack, and write the date and time beside it.
2. **Record the amount.** Write the amount for each drain on your drain record card and in the log at the back of this guide. Keep each drain separate.
3. **Change the bag when it is half full.** Change it for a fresh bag as Dr Kumar's nurses have shown you, then restore the suction. Carry on marking the new bag from that point.
4. **Bring your record** to every review, or read it out when a nurse calls you.



> If you are not sure how to read the bag, change it or restore the suction, call Dr Kumar's nurses. They would much rather talk you through it than have you guess.

Living with a drain

- **Keep the bag supported.** Pin it to your garment or clothing, or carry it in a pouch, so its weight never pulls on the tube.
- **Showering.** You can shower after 48 hours, or as directed.
- **Sleeping.** Lay the bag beside you on the bed, with the tube free of kinks, so it is not pulled as you turn.
- **Clothing.** Loose, front-opening tops and pull-on pants are easiest to wear over your garment and drains.
- **Driving.** You may drive with drains in once you are comfortable and safe to do so, although most patients wait until the drains are out.



When to Call



Call Dr Kumar's nurses: 0477 775 404

Dr Kumar's nurses provide ongoing contact and care for his patients. Call if you notice:

- Temperature of 38°C or higher, or shivers
- Redness spreading from a wound, or a wound that becomes hot, more painful or smelly
- Discharge or pus from a wound, or a wound that opens
- Swelling on one side that is much greater than the other, or that comes on suddenly
- Bleeding that soaks through the dressing
- Drain output that suddenly increases, turns bright red, or stops suddenly with swelling around it
- A drain that falls out or leaks heavily around the tube
- Pain that is not controlled by your pain relief
- Nausea or vomiting that stops you eating or drinking

Call 000 for chest pain, sudden shortness of breath, coughing up blood, or a painful, swollen calf. These can be signs of a blood clot.

Looking after your wounds

- Your Prineo and Micropore tapes stay on for four to six weeks, ideally six, depending on how they are holding. Dr Kumar's nurses remove them. If an edge starts to lift, do not peel it back; reinforce it with pharmacy tape or call the team.
- After showering, pat the tapes dry, then use a hair dryer on a cool or low setting if needed so they are completely dry. The skin around the scars can be numb, so hold the dryer well away and use it carefully to avoid burns.
- Wear your compression garment for six weeks.
- No lifting over 5 kg for six weeks.
- No baths, spas, pools or ocean swimming until your wounds have healed and the team has cleared you, usually around six weeks.
- Stay nicotine-free for 8 weeks after body contouring, and 6 weeks after other operations.

If a drain falls out

Cover the site with a clean, dry dressing, keep the tube and bag, and call Dr Kumar's nurses. Do not try to push the tube back in.

Practice: 1300 267 726 · drkumar.com.au

Drain Log

Record each drain separately, at the same time each day. A drain is usually ready to come out once it has drained less than 20 mL in 24 hours on two days in a row.

NAME _____ DATE OF SURGERY _____ OPERATION _____

Date	Time	Drain 1 (mL)	Drain 2 (mL)	Drain 3 (mL)	Colour	Notes (wounds, pain, temperature)

Drain Log (continued)

Date	Time	Drain 1 (mL)	Drain 2 (mL)	Drain 3 (mL)	Colour	Notes (wounds, pain, temperature)