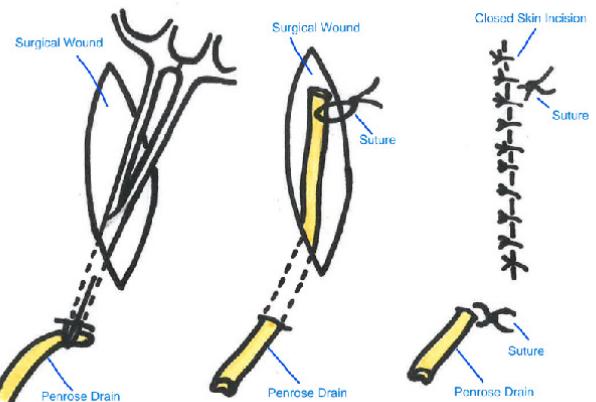


Penrose Drain Management

What is a Penrose Drain?

A Penrose drain is a latex tube which is surgically placed within a wound. It temporarily allows fluid to drain passively from the wound, to aid healing. The drain is typically stitched to the skin to hold it in place, and you will see the tube exit at a point near to the surgical incision. The drain is typically removed after a few days.



What to expect following surgery:

Exercise restrictions:

Following any surgery, it is important to rest your pet. Ideally, they should be rested in a crate or a suitable small room. Running, jumping and active playing must be prevented, usually for 10-14 days following surgery to allow your pet to heal. This will mean keeping them on the lead only for short walks to the garden to allow them to toilet or to provide a litter tray in their recovery area.

What is 'normal' fluid production?

- The fluid produced from the drain will leak directly onto your pet's skin and fur so cleaning will be required.
- The volume of fluid produced via the drain can vary dramatically depending on the type of surgery performed, the location, and the duration that the drain has been in place.
- Initially the volume of fluid produced from the drain will be at its highest. This volume will then typically reduce over the first 24-48hrs following surgery. Fluid production may never be zero.
- The fluid can range in colour from blood red to a clear pink colour.
- The consistency can be very liquid or may be a thicker fluid.
- Blood clots may be passed via the drain.

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Home Environment:

Due to the nature of the fluid production, you will need to house your pet in an area that is easy to wipe clean (for example in a crate with old bedding) as soft furnishings will become soiled. When your pet shakes, this can cause spread of fluid onto the surrounding area.

Caring for the drain at home:

- Cleaning of your pet will be required.
- The frequency that you will need to perform this will vary depending on the volume of fluid being produced. Initially this may be as frequently as every 2-4 hours, but this may reduce to a few times per day.
- You can gently wipe or shower the skin and coat surrounding the drain with lukewarm water. Do not use any shampoos near to the drain site. Gently pat dry.
- Monitor the skin around the drain as excessive fluid production can cause the skin to become inflamed. Applying Vaseline topically to the skin surrounding the drain exit hole will help to prevent this. This can be applied each time you clean the skin.
- Some drain management at home will be required.
- It is important to check the drain site daily to ensure that the drain is intact and functioning correctly.
- Check that the stitch holding the drain in place is still intact and that the drain is still correctly held into place.
- Check that there has not been any interference by your pet – using a buster collar/body suit as appropriate.
- Signs to be concerned about include brown or creamy fluid which is foul smelling, pain around the drain or breakage or dislodgement of the drain. Please contact us if these are noticed.
- If you have any concerns at this point, please get into contact with us and we will be happy to advise you.

If you feel like your pet will not tolerate this type of post operative care due to temperament, or if you are struggling, please do let us know. Likewise, if you feel like this is not a suitable option for you for any other reason, please speak to your clinician about organising an alternative treatment plan.

For any further information, please contact the hospital on 0117 394 0513 or email SAH@langfordvets.co.uk. Any urgent queries need to be by telephone.

