



Client Health Education Resource

Negative Pressure Wound Therapy VACVia



The 3M KCI VACVia system is made up of a foam dressing and a **disposable** Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) machine. It is being used to help heal your Wound Skin Graft.

Your dressing care will be directed by (Nurse to check ✓):

- Your Surgeon: please book a follow-up appointment. Date: _____
- Your Family Physician/Nurse Practitioner (NP): please book an appointment. Date _____
- Your Community Nurse Specialized in Wound Ostomy Continence (NSWOC)/Wound Clinician.

You will receive a phone call from the Community Health Unit office to plan your clinic or home visits for your dressing changes. If you are discharged from hospital and you do not receive a phone call within 2 days, call your Community Health Unit (see back page). Your next dressing change is due on: _____.

In the unlikely event that there is a problem with the dressing (see page 4), the Nurse will provide you with a small bag of trouble-shooting supplies. The Nurse will teach you how to use your supplies and discuss which Dressing Plan you should follow if the problem cannot be fixed (see page 5).

Community Health Unit Contact Information <i>To be completed by the Community Health Nurse</i>		
Name of Health Unit/Office:	Address:	Phone Number:
After Hours Contact Information:		

For urgent Nursing or Medical help, see back page for directions.

**Please bring this information with you for all appointments
or if you visit the Emergency Department.**

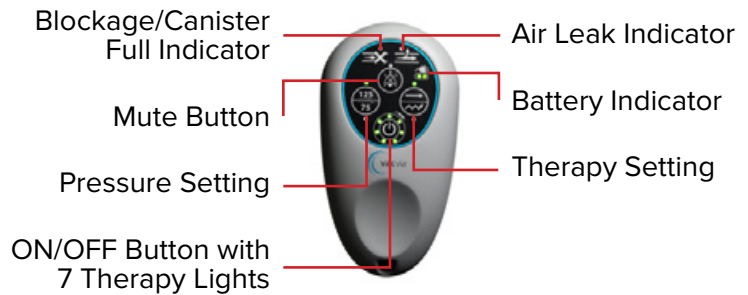
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Frequently Asked Questions

How does it work?

- The VACVia's suction helps with healing:
 - For wounds: it helps new tissue grow and gently pulls the wound edges together.
 - For closed incisions: it helps hold the edges of the incision together.
 - For skin grafts: it helps hold the graft in place.
 - **It is very important that the suction is ON for 24 hours a day.** It is to be turned OFF only for dressing changes and showering (as discussed with the Nurse, see below).
- The suction pulls the drainage through the dressing and into the canister.
- VACVia will 'beep' when the canister needs to be changed (¾ full). If you have an incision or graft, the drainage amount should be small-to-none.
- VACVia uses lights (**GREEN** and **YELLOW**) and 'beeps' to alert you when there is a problem with the dressing or the machine (see page 3).
- The dressing must stick firmly on the skin to stop air from going under the dressing causing an air leak and a loss of suction.
- VACVia uses re-chargeable batteries and runs for 7 days; it then shuts itself off.
- There are 7 Therapy Lights, one light for each day of therapy. As each day of therapy is completed, one of the lights will turn off.
- The machine has a carrying case, if needed.



What do I need to do while I have this dressing on?

- **While you are awake**, check every 2 hours that:
 - The dressing is firm to the touch.
 - The tubing clamp is open.
 - The canister is not full.
 - The 7-Day Therapy Life Indicator's **GREEN** lights are visible, showing that the machine is working.
 - The battery has enough charge left in it (plug in the machine if watching TV, reading, etc.).
- **Before going to sleep**,
 - Ensure the canister has enough space to collect the drainage overnight.
 - Plug in the machine to fully recharge the batteries.



How long can the machine be unplugged?

Up to 9 hours.

Does it hurt?

- It is normal to feel a slight pulling or tugging due to the suction. If this hurts, take your pain medication if prescribed, or talk to your Nurse regarding pain medication.
- You may feel some discomfort when the dressing is removed.

What needs to be planned for my dressing changes?

With your Community Health Nurse, plan:

- The days and times for your dressing change.
- When to have a shower (if allowed, see below).
- For wounds only: when to turn the machine OFF (usually 30 minutes before the change).

When to take pain medication, if needed (usually 30 to 45 minutes before the dressing change).



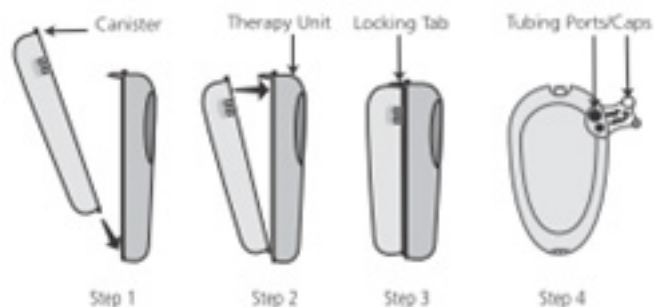

Write the plan here:

Can I have a shower/tub bath?

- If the dressing is covering a skin graft, do not shower or tub bath. Showering must wait until the dressing is no longer needed so that the graft is not disturbed.
- If the dressing is covering a wound or incision, you may shower (no tub-baths) with the dressing in place, but the shower must be done immediately before a scheduled dressing change.
- The device is battery-run therefore it **must be disconnected** from the dressing prior to the shower.
- How to set up for your shower:
 - Gather your supplies (an alcohol swab, two – 2x2 gauze dressings, and tape),
 - Wash your hands.
 - Press the Power button for 3 seconds to turn the device OFF.
 - Close the tubing clamp.
 - Clean the connection point of dressing tubing and canister port with the alcohol swab for 30 seconds and let air dry.
 - Disconnect the dressing tubing from the canister tubing.
 - Use a 2x2 gauze to cover the tubing ends; tape the gauze in place.
- Your shower time should be kept short; the dressing is waterproof but try to keep the shower spray off the dressing as much as possible.
- After your shower, gently pat the dressing dry and wait for the nurse to change your dressing.

Trouble-Shooting

Note: Alarms may be muted by pressing the Mute button for 3 seconds; this muting will last 2 minutes.

Alerts Display	What to Do
<p>Therapy Complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the machine is at the last 8 hours of therapy, the last Therapy Indicator will show both a YELLOW light and a GREEN light. When the machine is ready to shut off, the last GREEN light goes off, leaving the YELLOW light. An alarm will sound of 8 beeps followed by one beep for 5 seconds and then the machine turns off. 	<p>Look for the YELLOW and GREEN lights and listen for the 8 beeps. Notify the Nurse that the therapy is completed.</p>
<p>Low Battery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solid YELLOW light with 2 beeps repeating every 4 minutes means that the battery is low. 	<p>The alarm indicates approximately 2 hours of battery power remaining - plug in immediately to prevent the therapy from stopping.</p>
<p>Blockage/Canister Full:</p> <p>Solid YELLOW light and a beep repeating every 15 seconds means there is a blockage.</p>  	<p>To clear any blockages, ensure the tubing clamp is open and that the tubing is not kinked.</p> <p>Change the full canister:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn the device ON/OFF – press the Power button for 3 seconds. Slide the tubing clamp down to where tubing plugs into the canister. Close the clamp. Unplug the tubing from canister port. Press down on the canister tab to remove the canister. Install the new canister and listen for a distinct click to confirm it is in place. Reattach the tubing to canister port. Open the tubing clamp. Turn therapy ON – press the Power button for 3 seconds. Put the used canister in the garbage.
<p>Air Leak::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solid YELLOW light and a beep repeating every 15 seconds means there is a leak. 	<p>Ensure tubing connection is tight.</p> <p>Fix the air leak:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find your trouble-shooting supplies. Do not shut off the machine. Run your fingers along the edges of the dressing to find areas which seem loose or have lifted. Fix the leaks by covering them with small strips of the transparent film dressing. When the leak(s) is fixed correctly, the YELLOW light goes off and the alarm stops. If unable to fix the leak, see page 5 'Nothing is Working...".
<p>Device Failure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the unit lights will turn on and flash. Two beeps will sound, repeating every 15 seconds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the batteries are charged. Try turning the device on; if unable to get the machine to start, see page 5 "Nothing is Working...".

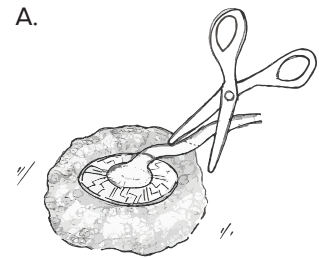
Call the Community Health Unit office and follow trouble-shooting tips provided and/or Call 3M/KCI Customer Service 1-800-668-5403; there is someone always available to help.

Nothing is Working...

1. Let the Community Health Unit office know as soon as possible that there is a problem with the dressing and/or machine which you cannot fix.
2. You will need to do the following to manage the dressing:
 - Find your trouble-shooting supplies (scissors, dressing, tape, etc.).
 - Ensure the machine is OFF; press/hold the Power button for 3 seconds
 - Wash your hands.
 - Follow the checked (✓) Dressing Plan below

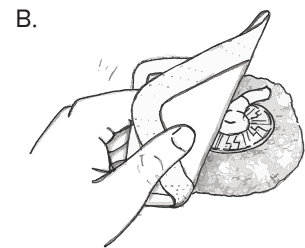
Dressing Plan #1: Cut & Cover - Wound or Incision or Skin Graft

- Close the white tubing clamp.
- Cut the tubing close to the black dressing (see image A).
- Cover the cut tube with the dressing that has been supplied; tape in place as needed (see image B).
- This dressing will catch the drainage, change it as often as needed to keep it dry.
- Keep the machine and the canister for the Nurse.



Dressing Plan #2: Dressing Removal - Wound

- Make sure the suction has been **OFF** for 30 minutes before removing the dressing.
- Gently remove the dressing. Some of the wound fillers (black and/or white foam, mesh dressing) may come out with the dressing at the same time – this is okay.
- Remove any loose wound fillers. If the wound has deep packing, then as talked about with the Nurse, remove the wound fillers that have been packed into these spaces. If they do not come out with a gentle tug then leave them in place.
- Cover the entire wound with the dressing supplied. Secure with tape if needed.
- This dressing will catch the drainage; change it as often as needed to keep it dry.
- Disconnect the dressing tubing from the canister tubing. Place the old dressing and all of the fillers from the wound into a plastic bag for the Nurse to see on the next visit.
- Keep the machine and the canister for the Nurse.



Dressing Plan #3: Dressing Removal - Incision

- Gently remove dressing.
- Cover the entire incision with the dressings given to you, Secure with tape if needed.
- Disconnect the dressing tubing from the canister tubing; place the old dressing into a plastic bag for the Nurse to see on the next visit.
- Keep the machine and the canister for the Nurse.

When to Seek Help

Call the Nurse and/or your Surgeon/Family Physician/Nurse Practitioner for any of the following:

- New or increasing pain around the wound, incision or graft site.
- A temperature of 38°C or higher.
- Feeling unwell (nausea/vomiting, lightheaded, dizzy or weak).
- Swelling, warmth, tenderness redness, increase itchiness around the dressing site.
- Bad/foul smell coming from the dressing or canister.
- Need to change the canister more often than usual.
- Drainage in the tube or canister is thicker, has changed colour or there is increased drainage.

Turn OFF the machine and call Emergency Services (911) immediately if you see the following in the dressing, tubing, or canister:

- Blood (red); unexpected or new bleeding.
- Bile (green) for abdominal wounds only.
- Stool (brownish) for abdominal wounds only.

For clients living with spinal cord injury and having signs/symptoms of Autonomic Dysreflexia **turn OFF the machine and call Emergency Services (911).**

Community Health Unit Contact Numbers

Health Authority	Area	Phone Number
Fraser Health	All areas	855-412-2121
Interior Health	Call the Community Health Unit closest to your home	
Northern Health	Call the Community Health Unit closest to your home	
Vancouver Coastal Health	North Shore/Coastal	604-986-7111
	Richmond	604-875-4510
	Vancouver	604-263-7377
Vancouver Island	South Island	250-388-2273
	Central Island	250-739-5749
	North Island	250-331-8570

Created by: British Columbia Provincial Nursing Skin & Wound Committee



Making better
decisions together
with patients
and families

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