

# Client Health Education Resource

## Negative Pressure Wound Therapy

### Prevena Plus 125 for Closed Incisions

### Patient Self-Care



Your 3M/KCI Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) system is made up of a foam dressing, tubing, a small canister, and a disposable Prevena Plus 125 negative pressure (vacuum) device. Your surgeon is using this system to help heal your surgical incision.

Your Follow-up Appointment will be with:

☐ Your surgeon      ☐ The clinic      ☐ Your Family Physician/Nurse Practitioner (NP)

Your appointment is booked \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ .  
Date Time

If not booked, please book appointment \_\_\_\_\_ days from your surgery date.

Your surgeon/the clinic contact information:

\_\_\_\_\_

In the unlikely event that there is a problem, with the dressing (e.g., a leak, see page 3), the nurse will provide you with a small bag of troubleshooting supplies and if required, an extra canister. The nurse will teach you how to use your supplies and discuss how to manage your dressing if the problem cannot be fixed (see page 5).

**For urgent Nursing or Medical help, see page 5 for directions.**

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

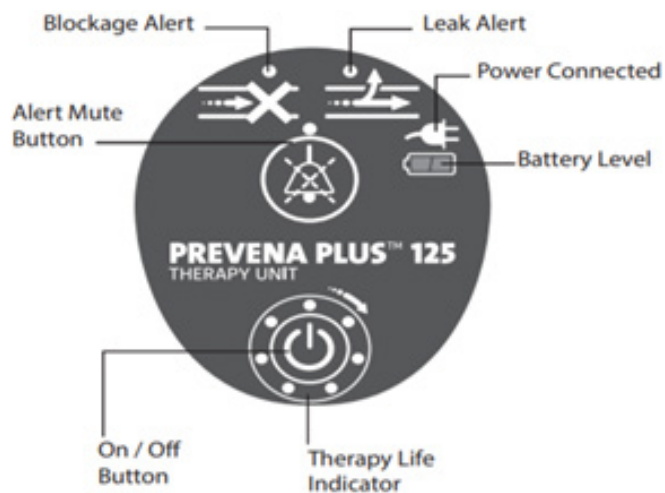
## Table of Content

Frequently Asked Questions.....	2
Troubleshooting.....	3
Nothing is Working .....	5
When To Seek Help.....	5

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How does it work?

- The Prevena Plus 125's vacuum suction helps heal surgical incisions by holding the edges of the incision together. **It is very important that the suction be ON for 24 hours a day.**
- The suction pulls drainage from the incision into the canister. The drainage amount should be very small to no drainage.
- The dressing must stick firmly to the skin to stop air from going under the dressing, causing an leak and loss of suction.
- The device will 'beep/light up' to alert you when there is a problem (see page 3).
- Prevena Plus 125 runs on a rechargeable battery for up to a full 7 days and then shuts itself off.
- The device can be disposed of through your neighbourhood electronic recycling program, if available.
- The device comes with a carrying case.



### How long do I have this dressing on?

The Prevena Plus 125 dressing may stay on for up to 7 days. Your surgeon will decide when it will be removed or changed.

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

- **While you are awake;** check every 2 hours that the:
  - o Dressing is firm to touch.
  - o Tubing is not kinked.
  - o Canister is less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  full.
  - o ON/OFF button is showing **GREEN**
  - o Battery has enough charge left in it. If not, plug the device in.
- **Before going to sleep,** do 1 more check.



### Does it hurt?

- It is normal to feel a slight pulling or tugging due to the suction. If this hurts, take your pain medication as ordered by your surgeon. If your pain medication does not help, call your surgeon.
- You may feel some discomfort when the dressing is removed.

### Can I have a shower/tub bath?

- Yes, you may shower but tub bathing should wait until after NPWT has been discontinued.
- When showering,
  - o Ensure the device, which runs on batteries, is outside of the shower spray area, (e.g. put it just outside the shower, hang it on the soap/shampoo holder).
  - o Try to keep the shower spray off the dressing as much as possible. Should soap or shampoo come in contact with the dressing, lightly rinse it off with an indirect spray of the shower.
  - o When finished, lightly pat dry the dressing including the surrounding area. Do not rub as rubbing may lift the edges of the dressing.

### My surgeon told me to remove the dressing once the therapy is done, how do I do this?

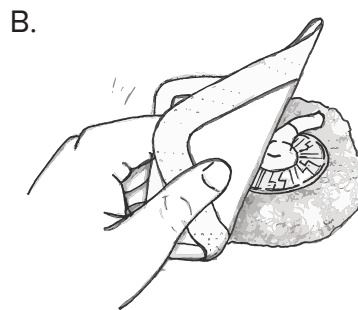
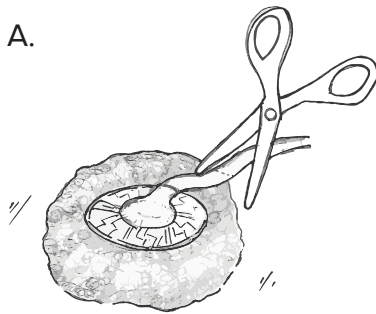
- Find 1 corner of the dressing and gently lift the edge. Then go around the whole dressing, lifting all of the edges. Remove the dressing.
- As your surgeon has ordered, cover the incision with the dressing supplied or leave the incision open to the air. Discard the dressing and canister in the garbage. Recycle the device, if possible.

Troubleshooting	
<p><b>Prevena Plus 125</b> is ON and working correctly when there is at least 1 of the 7 Therapy Life Indicator <b>green</b> lights showing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once the therapy is on for 1 continuous hour, the 7-day lifespan of the device begins. It continues this count down even if the therapy is off.</li> <li>• Each <b>green</b> light shows how many therapy days are left.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Alarms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The alarm sounds 2 beeps that repeat every 15 seconds, except for the Low Battery Indicator, which beeps every 4 minutes. The alarm sounds until the problem is corrected.</li> <li>• To mute the alarm for 2 minutes, press and hold the Alert Mute button for 3 seconds. Repeat if needed.</li> </ul>	
Alarms	What to Do
<p><b>Therapy near completion/ finished</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When there is 8 hours left of therapy, the last Therapy Life Indicator will show both <b>green</b> and <b>yellow</b> light.</li> <li>• When the therapy is finished, only the <b>yellow</b> light is showing. The device will sound 8 beeps, followed by a continuous beep for 5 seconds, then turn off.</li> </ul>	<p>Watch for the yellow light to come on. Once the device has shut itself off, follow your surgeon's instructions regarding the dressing. If you are to remove the dressing, see the top of this page for the how-to-do steps.</p>
<p><b>Low battery indicator</b></p> <p>Solid <b>yellow</b> light with 2 beeps repeating every 4 minutes.</p>	<p>Alarm indicates approximately 2 hours of therapy remaining; plug the charger into a power source and then attach the charger to the device.</p>
<p><b>Leak alarm</b></p> <p>Solid <b>yellow</b> light with 2 beeps repeating every 15 seconds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find your troubleshooting kit.</li> <li>• Check the edges of the dressing to find the site where the dressing has lifted causing the leak. Cover with small strips of transparent film drape to seal the leak.</li> <li>• Ensure tubing connection is tight.</li> <li>• Press/hold ON/OFF button 3 seconds to turn therapy on. If the air leak is resolved, the <b>green</b> light will stay on. If not, alarm will sound again; try again to seal the leak.</li> <li>• If unable to seal the leak, see back page "Nothing is Working"</li> </ul>

<p><b>Blockage/canister full alarm</b></p> <p>Solid <b>yellow</b> light with 2 beeps repeating every 15 seconds.</p> <div> <p>Blockage Alert</p> </div> <div> <div> <p>Tubing Clamp</p> </div> <div> <p>Canister</p> </div> <div> <p>Therapy Unit</p> </div> <div> <p>Locking Tab</p> </div> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the white tubing clamp is open and tubing is not kinked causing a blockage.</li> <li>• If alarm is still on, then change the canister: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Press/hold ON/OFF button 3 seconds to turn therapy off.</li> <li>○ Slide tubing clamp down close to the canister. Close the clamp. Unplug tubing from canister tubing ports.</li> <li>○ Remove device from the carrying case, if using.</li> <li>○ Press Locking Tab on canister to remove canister.</li> <li>○ Hold new canister in 1 hand and the device in the other. Slide the bottom of canister into the slot on the bottom of the device.</li> <li>○ Close the canister into the device (therapy unit); the Locking Tab will click when canister is secure.</li> <li>○ Return device to the carrying case, if using.</li> <li>○ Cleanse canister port site with the alcohol swab for 30+ seconds. Allow to dry for 30+ seconds.</li> <li>○ Reattach dressing tubing to the canister ports.</li> <li>○ Press/hold ON/OFF button 3 seconds to turn therapy on.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>System default alarm</b></p> <p>All lights turn on and flash. 2 beeps will sound, repeating every 15 seconds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try turning device on, press/hold ON/OFF 3 seconds.</li> <li>• If unable to restart device, see page 5 “Nothing is Working”.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3M/KCI Customer Service 1-800-668-5403</b></p>	

## Nothing is Working...

1. **Let your surgeon/Family Physician/NP know as soon as possible that there is a problem with the dressing and/or device (if after office hours or on the weekend, leave a message).**
2. You will need to do the following to manage the dressing:
  - o Find your troubleshooting supplies (scissors, dressing and tape).
  - o Ensure the device is OFF; press/hold the ON/OFF button for 3 seconds.
  - o Wash your hands.
  - o Cut the tubing close to the purple dressing (see image A).
  - o Cover the cut tube with the dressing that has been supplied; tape in place as needed (see image B).
  - o This dressing will catch the drainage, change it as often as needed to keep it dry.
  - o Throw the canister in the garbage.
  - o Recycle the device (electronic recycling) where possible.



## When to Seek Help

Call your surgeon/Family Physician/NP if you have any of the following:

- New or increasing pain.
- A fever of 38°C or higher.
- Feeling unwell (nausea/vomiting, lightheaded, dizzy or weak).
- Swelling, redness, warmth, tenderness, increasing itchiness at your dressing site.
- Bad/foul smell coming from the dressing or canister.
- Drainage in the tube or canister is thicker, has changed colour or there is an increase in drainage.

**Turn OFF** the device and immediately call Emergency Services (911) if you see the following in the dressing, tube, 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 device and call Emergency Services (911).**







**Created by:** British Columbia Provincial Nursing Skin & Wound Committee

For more copies, go online at [vch.eduhealth.ca](http://vch.eduhealth.ca)  
or email [pchem@vch.ca](mailto:pchem@vch.ca) and quote Catalogue No. **FO.160.N44**  
© Vancouver Coastal Health, October 2025

The information in this document is intended solely for the person  
to whom it was given by the health care team.  
[vch.ca](http://vch.ca)