

YOUR GUIDE TO WOUND VAC THERAPY

Understanding Your Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) System

What is a Wound VAC?

A Wound VAC (Vacuum-Assisted Closure) is a specialized medical device that uses negative pressure—a gentle, continuous vacuum-like suction—to accelerate healing. A sterile foam dressing is fitted directly into your wound, sealed with a clear protective drape, and connected via tubing to a portable therapy pump unit. We are partnered with Solventum for more information please visit their site: <https://www.solventum.com>

How it helps you heal: The machine continuously removes excess fluids and bacteria, reduces swelling around the area, keeps the wound environment warm and clean, and draws the margins of the tissue closer together while actively encouraging localized blood flow.



Essential Machine Care Tips

Operating a portable therapy unit at home requires specific daily maintenance habits to guarantee structural system integrity and clinical safety:

Keep the Power On 24/7

The therapy system must remain powered on and running continuously. **Never turn off the pump for more than 2 hours per day.** If left off, fluid pools quickly, significantly elevating your risk of a severe infection.

Battery and Portability Management

Plug your machine in to charge every single night while sleeping. When ambulating or leaving home, always keep the external AC power cord packed with you to maintain continuous operation.

Device Placement

Always keep your machine sitting or hanging in an upright, vertical position. Laying the pump flat can distort fluid sensors and trigger accidental alarms. Keep it lower than the wound site when sitting or resting.

Showering Guidelines

The pump machine itself is not waterproof.

Disconnect the pump from the tubing only if explicitly permitted by your home nurse. The dressing itself is sealed and splash-resistant, but never submerge it in water.

Understanding Alarms & Dressing Appearance

When the system is sealed and drawing properly, the foam dressing should look collapsed, prune-like, and wrinkled. If the device starts beeping, do not panic. It is communicating standard system corrections:

Alarm Type	What It Means & How to Handle
Leak Detected	The machine has detected a breach in the seal. Run your fingers firmly along the edges of the clear plastic drape and press down tightly. Use extra transparent drape strips provided by your nurse to patch any loose edges.
Canister Full	The collection chamber is full of fluid and requires substitution. Turn off the alarm and contact your designated home health agency or clinic to have a medical professional swap out the canister.
Low Battery	The internal charge is depleted. Immediately connect the machine to a wall outlet using the AC charging block.

CRITICAL RED FLAGS – WHEN TO SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL HELP

Turn off the machine immediately, apply firm manual pressure with clean gauze, and call 911 or visit the closest emergency room if you experience:

- **Active Bleeding:** A sudden flow of bright red blood rapidly filling up the clear tubing or collection canister.
- **Infection Warning Signs:** Developing a systemic fever, chills, worsening pain, expanding skin redness, or noticing thick yellow/green foul-smelling discharge beneath the drape.
- **Loss of Power/Suction for >2 Hours:** If your machine remains completely unpowered or broken for more than 2 hours, the airtight environment trap can foster rapid bacteria. The dressing must be completely removed by a professional and replaced with standard clean wet-to-dry gauze.

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