Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Caring for Your UreSil® Thora-Vent™

This information explains how to care for your UreSil Thora-Vent.

About Your Thora-Vent

Your Thora-Vent (also called a thoracic vent) is a small device that's connected to your chest. It has a one-way valve with a self-sealing port and a small catheter (thin, flexible tube) that lets extra air out of your chest. It lets your lung fully expand. The vent is secured to your chest with adhesive wings. It may also be sutured (stitched) in place. You may be discharged from the hospital with a Thora-Vent if you have an air leak that lasts for 7 or more days.

The parts of your vent

Your vent is made up of 2 parts: the chamber and adhesive wings (see Figure 1).

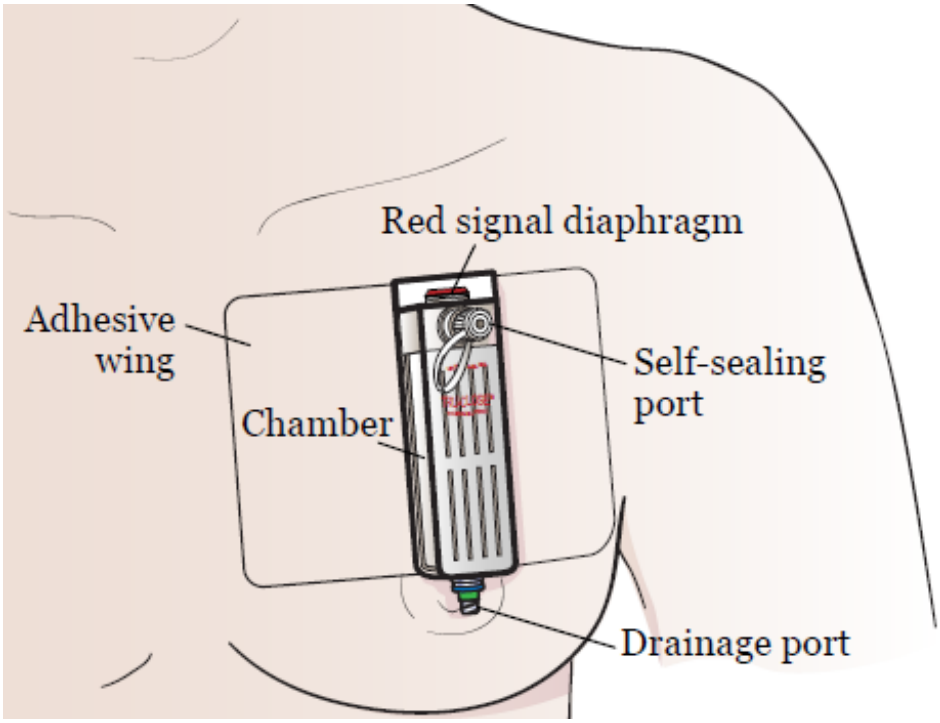


Figure 1. Your Thora-Vent

The chamber is the main part of your vent. Within the chamber, there is a red signal diaphragm that tells your healthcare provider the status of your lung. When the diaphragm stays in the downward position for about 1 hour or longer, your lung may have fully expanded. Tell your healthcare provider if this happens.

The 2 adhesive wings are located on both sides of the chamber and hold it in place (see Figure 1).

How to Care For Your Thoracic Vent

- Your Thora-Vent should touch your body directly. No part of the catheter (tube) should be visible. If your catheter is visible, call your healthcare provider right away.

- If the adhesive wings start to separate from your skin, use tape to secure them in place. Don’t put tape on the chamber.
- Don’t change the position or remove your vent at any time. If your vent moves out of place, call your healthcare provider right away. In the meantime, you can put the Vaseline® gauze that your nurse gave you over the site with clean, dry gauze on top of it. Tape them to your skin.
    - Your healthcare provider may instruct you to go to your local emergency room or to the Urgent Care Center (UCC) at Memorial Sloan Kettering. The UCC is located at:

        425 East 67th Street (between York and First Avenues)
        New York, NY 10065

- If your vent drains fluid, call your healthcare provider’s office right away.
    - If this happens, you may need to connect your vent to a drainage bag. To remove the fluid, open the valve at the bottom of the drainage bag and pour it into the toilet. If you need to do this, your healthcare provider will give you more information.

Your healthcare provider will check your Thora-Vent at your next clinic appointment.

Showering with your vent

You can shower, but it’s important to keep your vent dry.

- Cover your vent with a waterproof dressing (such as AquaGuard®) before you get in the shower.
- Use a hand-held showerhead if you have one. A hand-held showerhead can help direct the water away from your vent.

If your vent gets a little wet, dry it with a towel. If you submerge your vent in water, call your healthcare provider.

Do not take a bath, use a hot tub, go swimming, or submerge yourself in water while your vent is in place.

How to use an AquaGuard waterproof dressing

Follow the instructions below to put an AquaGuard waterproof dressing over your Thora-Vent before you shower. Make sure the AquaGuard sticks to your skin, not to your vent.

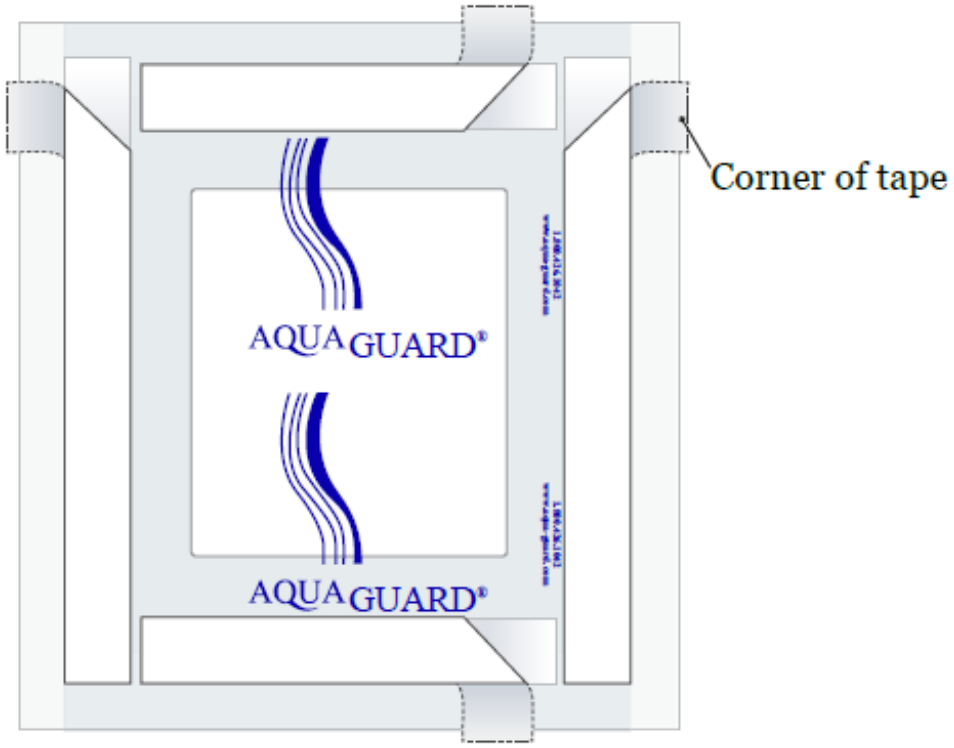


Figure 2. Folding the AquaGuard tape

- Peel off the top strip of tape and place the top edge of the AquaGuard above your vent. Press down firmly so it sticks to your skin.
- Peel off one of the side strips of tape and press that edge against your skin. If there’s any extra material, pinch it together so it forms a pleat and fold it down.
- Repeat step 4 with the opposite side of the AquaGuard.
- Repeat step 4 with the bottom of the AquaGuard.

To remove the AquaGuard, start at the top left or right corner and gently peel the AquaGuard down. Try to peel it in the same direction that your hair is growing. Be

careful not to pull on your vent.

Exercising with your vent

You can exercise while wearing your Thora-Vent. Doing mild exercises, such as walking and climbing stairs, will help you gain strength and feel better.

You can also do breathing exercises to help expand your lungs, including:

- Coughing and deep breathing exercises. A member of your care team will teach you how to do these exercises.
- Using your incentive spirometer every 2 hours while you're awake.
- ◦ For more information, read *How To Use Your Incentive Spirometer* (www.mskcc.org/pe/incentive_spirometer).
- Using an Acapella or Flutter valve. These devices help clear mucus and make breathing easier. If you need one, your healthcare provider will order it for you.
  - For more information, read *How to Use Your Aerobika®* (www.mskcc.org/pe/aerobika).

Activities to Avoid While Wearing Your Vent

Follow these guidelines until your healthcare provider tells you it’s safe:

- Don’t fly.
- Don’t drive a car.
- Don’t lift anything heavier than 5 pounds (2.3 kilograms).
- Don’t take a bath, use a hot tub, go swimming, or submerge yourself in water.

When to Call Your Healthcare Provider

Call your healthcare provider if:

- You have a fever of 101 °F (38.3 °C) or higher.
- Your vent becomes separated from your skin.
- You can see part of the catheter going into your skin.
- Your red signal diaphragm is in the downward position for 1 hour or longer.
- The vent moves out of place or falls off.
- You have new chest pain or shortness of breath.
- The area near the insertion site becomes red or puffy, or feels warm and painful when you touch it.

- You have pain that doesn’t go away with pain medication.
- Your vent is collecting blood or other fluid.
- You have questions or concerns.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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