Negative Pressure Wound Therapy
(NPWT or Wound VAC Therapy)

This handout explains what Negative Pressure Wound Therapy is and how it may help you. This treatment uses negative pressure (or suction), to help wounds heal.

Benefits
- Increases blood flow to wound.
- Provides a moist wound healing environment.
- Draws wound edges together.
- Removes excess fluid and infectious materials.
- Reduces wound odor.
- Reduces need for frequent dressing changes.

How it works
- A special foam dressing is placed in the wound.
- A clear adhesive dressing seals in the foam dressing to create an airtight seal.
- Tubing is connected to the dressing, and to the NPWT machine.
- Therapy is started to preset negative pressure (suction) settings.
- Wound drainage collects in a disposable canister.
- The NPWT machine can be disconnected from outlet for short periods of time (i.e. a walk in the hall, gone for a test). To keep the battery charged, the machine should be plugged in as much as possible.

Dressing changes
- Typically done 3 times per week, yours will be done ____________.
- Done by a trained doctor or nurse.
- Slight discomfort is common with dressing changes. Take pain medicine 30-60 minutes prior to dressing changes.
- Ask your doctor or nurse about showering or bathing.

Length of time to heal wound
The length of time to heal a wound is different for every patient. Factors that can affect wound healing are:
- Condition, size and location of the wound
- Nutrition
- Elevated blood sugars
- Infection
When to call your health care provider

- Blood in your canister. Report this right away.
- Increased odor from your dressing. Slight odor is normal.
- Increased pain.
- Increased redness around the dressing.
- Increased warmth around dressing.
- Flu-like symptoms: fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, or muscle aches.