

Patient Education Handout: Incision and Drainage

- An abscess is collection of pus within the skin. Incision and drainage of the abscess allows the pus to drain to decrease pain and help prevent the infection from spreading.
- The pain often disappears after the pus has been drained.
- Packing material **was/was not** (circle one) placed inside the wound to allow more drainage and help the wound heal from the bottom first.
- If packing material was used, it needs to be changed every 24 hours.
- Once the packing material is no longer needed, or if you did not have any to begin with, you can soak the wound in warm soapy water 3 to 4 times a day until it is healed.
- Keep the site clean and dry by keeping the wound covered with a clean dry gauze until fully healed.
- Antibiotics are not always needed after an abscess is drained, your health care provider will inform you if antibiotic treatment is required.
- Watch for signs and symptoms of infection (recollection of pus, fever, increased pain and redness, red streaks near the wound, increased swelling) and return to the clinic or seek care from another health care provider.
- Return to the clinic for re-examination of the wound in _____.

