Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC) therapy of the wound

Introduction
You have been given this leaflet because it has been suggested that Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC) therapy may assist the healing of your wound.

What is Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC)?
Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC) is a medical device, which is a first line treatment for open wound management.
The combination of suction and a foam mesh to your wound leads to a variety of changes, which positively influence the healing process. VAC also helps to remove excess fluid from wounds.

What does the Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC) machine do?
Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC) is a specialised form of wound healing treatment that applies a vacuum (suction) to your wound through a sterile piece of foam. This foam is held in place over your wound with a clear adhesive cover. Plastic tubing forms a connection from the wound dressing to the VAC machine that collects excess fluid from the wound into a canister. The VAC stimulates the growth of healthy tissue and is useful in encouraging skin grafts to bond to a wound.

How long will it take for the therapy to improve my wound?
This very much depends on the following:
- The size and type of your wound
- Your general condition and
- The treatment prescribed by your doctor. If you have any questions, please ask your nurse or doctor.
Can I move around while on VAC therapy?
This depends on the location of the wound. Overall you need to be connected to the machine for 22 out of 24 hours a day; however the machine can be disconnected so that you can go to the toilet or have a bath. The machine has a battery support so that you can move around during the day without the VAC machine needing to be attached to power socket. If the battery is fully charged you will have 8 hours where you can move around freely, without having to stay close to a power socket.

Is VAC therapy painful in any way?
You may feel a slight sucking or ‘drawing’ sensation when VAC therapy is first started and sometimes the wound can itch as it heals. This is usually a good sign but if it persists or becomes unpleasant please tell your nurse.

How often does the dressing need changing?
The dressing is usually changed every 48 to 72 hours (2 to 3 days), but in some cases it may be left for up to 5 days if the Consultant decides that this is best for you.

Will the changing of the dressing hurt?
Some people experience slight discomfort during dressing changes depending on the type and location of the wound. The nursing staff will give you advice on pain relief and will be happy to talk through any concerns you may have.

What happens if the VAC machine’s alarm goes off?
Firstly, don’t panic. The machine has audio and visual alarms, which let the nursing staff know if there is a problem and what the problem is and these are easily solved. Just let the nursing staff know if you hear/see the alarm.
Contact information
If you are going home with the machine, please ring your district nurses if there is a problem, or ring KCI Medical on Tel: 0800 980 8800.

Further information
KCI Medical
Website: [www.kci-medical.co.uk/UK-ENG/home](http://www.kci-medical.co.uk/UK-ENG/home)