

Going Home with a Urinary Catheter

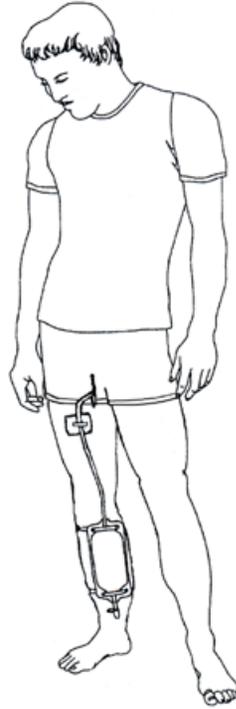
Doctor: _____

Phone Number: _____

About Your Catheter

A urinary catheter is a small tube that goes through your urethra and into your bladder. This tube then drains the urine made by your kidneys. A small balloon on one end of the tube holds it inside your bladder.

Your catheter connects to tubing and then a drainage bag. Depending on your doctor's preference, you may be able to use a leg bag which straps around your calf during the daytime. If you are using a leg bag during the day, you will need to change it to a larger nighttime bag prior to going to bed.



Caring for Your Catheter

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling the catheter, tubing or bags. This is the most important step in preventing the spread of infection.
- Wash the area between your legs and around the catheter or if able have a shower at least once a day with mild soap and water. This will help prevent irritation or infection. Rinse well, pat dry.
- If your catheter was inserted for a urology surgery, you may experience some minor blood in your urine as well as discharge/oozing around the catheter.

- Always wipe from the front to the back when washing or after a bowel movement.
 - For women menstruating, change a tampon or peri pad often and wash after each change. If you have had surgery, consult with your doctor when you can use a tampon.
 - Keep the tubing free of kinks. Avoid pulling or tugging on the catheter.
 - Keep drainage bag below bladder level so urine drains in a “downhill” direction. DO NOT allow the bag to touch the floor
 - Always secure the catheter tubing to the thigh with tape to prevent pulling. When using a leg bag, secure it to the leg with straps.
 - Do not disconnect tubing for any reason unless changing to a different bag.
 - When the bag is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ full, empty it into the toilet. DO NOT let the bag or drainage port touch the toilet.
 - Drink between 8 and 10 glasses of fluid each day to keep your urine flowing freely and decrease risk of complications. Heart or kidney patients should check with their doctor about the correct amount of fluid.
 - The drainage bag should be changed if the bag is odorous, discoloured, leaking or a new catheter is put in.
 - For Men: if the penis tip becomes irritated, you may apply a water soluble lubricant like KY Jelly for relief. Application of an oil based lubricant like Vaseline should be avoided.
- Studies have failed to show any benefit to applying antibiotic ointments.

Emptying the Bag

Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling the catheter or drainage bag.

- Open the clamp and drain out all the urine. If your doctor or nurse tells you, drain the urine into a measuring container, so you can record the amount. Otherwise drain the urine into the toilet and then close the clamp. Do not touch the end of the drain port with your fingers or touch the port on the inside of the measuring container.
- All drainage bags should be emptied when $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ s full or every 3–6 hours or more often as required. This helps to prevent undue trauma/traction on the urethra related to the weight of the bag.



Connecting your catheter to a different drainage bag

- If you are using a leg bag during the daytime-change it to the larger overnight drainage bag before you go to bed. This will allow your urine to drain properly and in a larger amount. **Never sleep using a leg bag.**
- Wash your hands with soap and water
- Empty your drainage bag.
- Clean the connection ports with an aseptic such as an alcohol wipe
- Disconnect the bag from the catheter
- Connect the larger nighttime drainage bag to the catheter

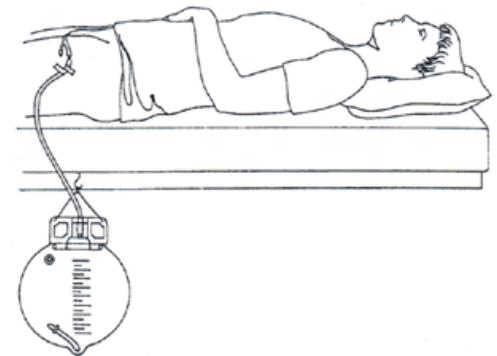
- Decide which side of the bed that you want to hang the drainage bag.

- Tape the drainage tubing to your thigh or abdomen on that side. You may have to shave your skin in that area. Leave some slack in the line so that you won't pull on the catheter when you move in bed.



- When you get into bed, arrange the drainage tubing so that it doesn't kink, loop or touch the floor. Place the cardboard stand holding the drainage bag beside the bed. Be sure you keep the drainage bag below your bladder level at all times, whether you are lying down, sitting or standing up.

- In the morning, use these same principles when changing back to your cleaned leg bag.



Cleaning your drainage bags

(leg and larger nighttime drainage bag when not in use)

- Drainage bags must be cleaned on a daily basis and air dried prior to the next usage. The bathtub is a great place to clean your bag.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Use a bleach solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water to clean your bags. Please wear gloves when handling bleach as it can cause skin burns.
- Thoroughly rinse the drainage bag with either solution and hang to air dry.
- You may then store the bag on a clean towel ready for your next bag exchange.

Call your doctor or seek medical help if

- No urine or very little urine is flowing into the collection bag for 4 or more hours and you feel like your bladder is full. The catheter could be blocked.
- You have new pain in your abdomen, pelvis, legs, or back.
- Your urine has changed colour, is very cloudy, looks bloody, or has large blood clots in it.
- The insertion site becomes very irritated, swollen, red, or tender, or you have pus draining from the catheter insertion site.
- Your urine has a foul smell or is cloudy.
- Urine is leaking from the catheter
- You have a fever of 38°C (100°F) or higher or **back or flank pain**, possibly with nausea, vomiting or chills.

After your doctor or nurse has removed your catheter

- It is important to continue to drink plenty of fluids to flush your bladder
- You may feel a burning sensation when first pass urine. This is normal and will decrease with time.
- If you have difficulty passing your urine, sitting in a tub of warm water can help. If you are still unable to urinate or your bladder feels full, phone your doctor or go to the emergency department.

Resources

www.HealthLinkBC.ca

For non-emergency health information call 8-1-1

Translation services available in over 130 languages.

Deaf and hearing-impaired assistance (TTY), call 7-1-1.

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