

Information about ...

Urethral Urinary Catheter Care

What is Urinary Catheter?

A urinary catheter is a hollow flexible tube which will drain urine from your bladder into a catheter bag. After inserting the urinary catheter, a small balloon is inflated at the end of the urinary catheter to hold the device in place. You will not need to go to the toilet to pass urine.

Please follow the advice in this leaflet and ask healthcare staff if you still need a urinary catheter.

Why do I need a Urinary Catheter?

There are a number of reasons why you may need a urinary catheter. The most common reasons are:

- As part of your recovery from surgery
- If you are unable to pass urine
- To measure how much urine you pass
- Managing some wounds

How will the Urinary Catheter be put in?

Healthcare staff will explain the procedure to you and will ask for your verbal consent. They will tell you what to expect so that you can report any side effects or problems.

The member of healthcare staff inserting your urinary catheter will take steps to help prevent infection. They will do this by:

- Preparing a clean trolley with the necessary equipment
- Cleaning their hands (hand hygiene) and putting on a plastic apron and gloves
- Carefully cleaning the area where they will insert the catheter
- Use a technique which reduces the risk of infection

Healthcare staff normally insert a urinary catheter into the bladder via the urethra. This is a small opening above the

vagina in women, and in men the urethra runs through the length of the penis.

There may be some discomfort as the urinary catheter is passed, this should settle down once the urinary catheter is in place.

Initially some people may experience a spasm or light cramps and, or the urge to pass urine more often. After insertion, these sensations usually lessen after a few days. If symptoms continue speak to a member of healthcare staff.

How will the healthcare staff look after my Urinary Catheter?

The healthcare staff will:

- Clean their hands (hand hygiene) before and after touching your urinary catheter or catheter bag.
- Check to see if you still need a urinary catheter.
- Make sure that your urinary catheter is continually connected to the catheter bag.
- Make sure that the area of skin around your urinary catheter (urethra) is cleaned.
- Make sure that your catheter bag is not in contact with any surface e.g. the floor.
- Make sure your catheter bag is placed below your bladder level for good drainage.
- Empty your catheter bag.

How should I look after my Urinary Catheter?

- If you can manage, it is important that you help the healthcare staff to look after your urinary catheter and drainage bag.
- Keep the area clean and dry and do not touch it.

- If you can, clean the area around your urinary catheter (urethra) with liquid soap and water.
- We recommend that you drink around 2 litres (10 – 12 cups) of fluid every day (unless we tell you otherwise i.e. if you are on fluid restriction or are nil by mouth). This will help keep your urine clear and prevent constipation.
- Avoid bending or kinking your urinary catheter tubing.
- Always keep your catheter drainage bag below your bladder level to make sure there is good drainage.
- Ask the healthcare staff if you still need your urinary catheter.

Things to look out for

Tell the member healthcare staff if you experience any of the following;

- you feel hot, cold or shivery
- you have lower back pain or tenderness
- you feel you are developing memory or concentration problems (confusion)
- your urinary catheter is leaking urine

Further Information

If you have any questions please ask the healthcare staff.