

DHEC Home Care Teaching: Catheter Care



I. What is a urinary catheter?

A urinary catheter drains urine from the bladder through a clear plastic tube and into a collection bag. The small balloon filled with water holds the tube inside the bladder. Urinary catheters come in different sizes.

II. Why do I need a catheter?

They are used to help manage various medical conditions. Catheters are often used for:

- Patient who have urinary retention or an inability to empty the bladder
- Patients who are severely ill
- Patients with deep wounds on the lower trunk of the body
- People who are unable to go to the toilet on their own and have no one at home who is able to help them

III. Changes to report to your nurse

- ✓ Cloudy urine
- ✓ Urine with a bad smell
- ✓ Urine that is gritty or crusty
- ✓ Urine with blood
- ✓ Urine with mucus
- ✓ Pain in the lower part of your back



- ✓ Burning where the tube goes into your body
- ✓ Pain around the catheter
- ✓ Stomach pain
- ✓ Fever or chills
- ✓ Leaking around the catheter

IV. Catheter self-care tips

1. Wash your hands with soap and water before and after touching the catheter, tube or bag.
2. Do not tug on or pull on the catheter tube.
3. Don't lie on or sit on the catheter tube or collection bag.
4. Keep the bag below the level of the bladder at all times.
5. Use a catheter strap to secure the tubing to the thigh.
6. Make sure there are no kinks or loops in the tubing.
7. Don't let the catheter bag or tubing touch the floor.
8. Empty urine from the bag at least twice a day (a.m. and p.m.). Do not let the drainage spigot touch anything when you are emptying the bag.
9. Drink at least eight glasses of liquid each day. Water, apple juice, cranberry juice and tea are good things to drink.
10. Wash around where the catheter enters the body with soap and water twice each day and after each bowel movement. Do not use powder or cornstarch.
11. Check the skin around where the catheter enters the body for signs of irritation like redness, pain, swelling or odor.



V. Changing the collection bag

To keep from getting an infection, it is best not to disconnect the collection bag. The nurse will change the collection bag when the catheter is changed.

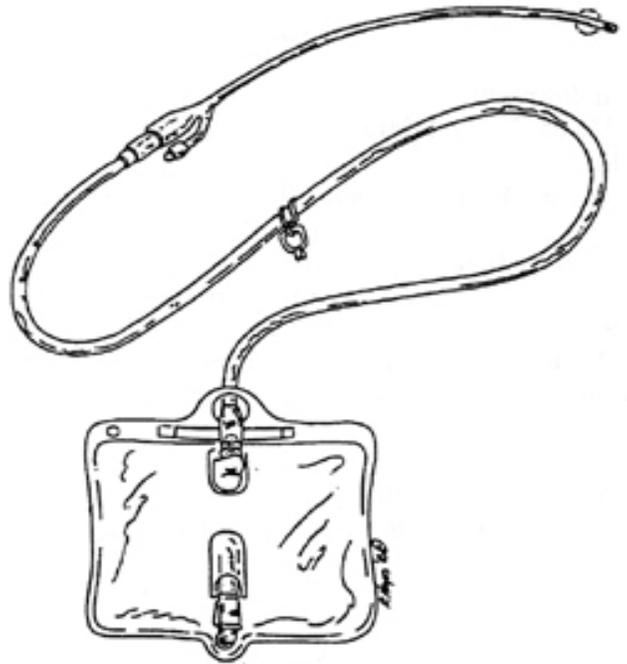
However if you change from a leg bag to a bedside collection bag, follow these steps to prevent infection:

1. Collect materials.
2. Empty urine from the collection bag into the toilet.
3. Wash your hands.
4. Open an alcohol wipe.
5. Clean the connection end of new/clean bag with the alcohol wipe. Do not allow the connection end to touch anything once you clean it. Keep the clean end on a clean surface or covered with the cap.
6. Disconnect the dirty bag from the catheter.
7. Immediately connect the catheter to the clean connection end/bag.

Follow the steps below for cleaning your bags.

VI. Cleaning the collection bags

1. First make a bleach solution. Mix $\frac{2}{3}$ cup cold water with 1 Tablespoon of unscented bleach.
2. Empty urine from collection bag.
3. Disconnect the collection bag from the catheter and connect a clean bag to the catheter.
4. Fill the dirty collection bag with 1 cup of cold tap water. If it is a leg bag, fill it through the connector and extension tubing. If it is a bedside bag fill it through the top tubing.
5. Shake the water in the bag for 10 seconds. Empty the water from the drainage spigot into the toilet. Repeat this step twice.
6. Place some of the bleach solution (from step 1 above) into a squeeze bottle or syringe. Squirt about a tablespoon of the bleach solution onto the drainage spigot and cap. Squirt the rest into the bag through the connector and extension tubing. If it is a bedside bag fill it through the top tubing. Empty the bag into the toilet.
7. Allow the bag to air dry by hanging it over a shower rail or clothes hanger so the water can drain completely from tubing.
8. After the bag and tubing has dried, cover the end of the tube with cap, plastic wrap or paper towel.



VII. Removing a catheter

Only take out the catheter if the “on-call” nurse tells you to. The “on-call” nurse will talk you through these steps:

1. Patient should lie down on their back with a towel under their buttocks.
2. Remove the catheter strap.
3. Put on gloves.
4. Look at the bottom of the catheter on the end closest to you (#20 in picture). The size of the catheter is on this end. The nurse may need to know the size of the catheter.
5. Take a syringe and connect it to the balloon port with a twisting motion (#20 in picture).
6. The syringe should begin to fill up with water, but you may have to pull back on the plunger to get all the water out of the balloon.
7. Slowly, gently pull out the catheter.
8. Take off gloves and throw the trash away. Wash your hands.

