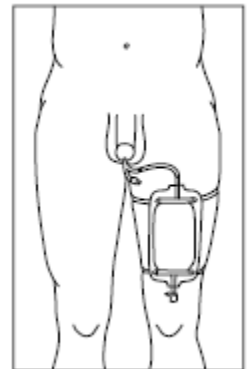


## URINARY CATHETER CARE SHEET

Caring for your catheter will improve comfort and reduce the risk of urinary infection.

- Do not remove your urinary catheter. If you feel that it is not working properly then consult with your doctor
- Clean the skin around your catheter and the whole catheter tube at least two times each day and after a bowel motion – warm water is sufficient to clean this area, if you use soap then rinse the area well afterwards as soap build-up can cause further irritation.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water before and after cleaning your catheter.
- Keep your urine collection bag below the level of your bladder. Your bladder is at the level of your waist. Keeping the bag below your bladder will prevent urine from flowing back into your bladder.
- Wear cotton underwear. This will allow good air flow and help keep your genital area dry.
- Drink plenty of liquids. Drink at least eight glasses of water each day. This will help flush out your bladder and prevent blockages. Healthy liquid choices to drink are water, milk, and drinks that do not have caffeine. Caffeine can be dehydrating.
- Do not have sexual intercourse while you have a catheter in place.
- Try to keep from getting constipated. If you are constipated you may need to push much harder when you have a bowel movement. This may cause you to leak urine around the catheter.
  - To keep you from getting constipated try the following measures;
    - Make sure you drink enough liquids.
    - Ensure you are getting enough fibre in your diet. Eat more whole grains, such as bran muffins and cereals, wheat germ and whole wheat bread, fresh fruits and vegetables. Prunes/prune juice or Kiwicrush can be beneficial.
- Be aware of foods or drinks that may irritate your bladder. Your bladder may become sensitive with a catheter. Common bladder irritants are as follows;
  - Acidic foods
  - Alcoholic beverages
  - Carbonated drinks
  - Drinks with caffeine
  - Spicy foods
  - Chocolate



- Try to avoid tugging or pulling on your catheter tubing. This can cause you to bleed and hurt your urethra.
- If you have urine leakage you may like to wrap gauze around the catheter where it enters your body. Make sure to change the gauze when it feels wet, however if your urine leakage is persistent and heavy, contact Dr Studd for further advice.
- Do not do Kegel (pelvic floor) exercises while you have a urinary catheter.

## How do I use a leg bag?

If you are up and about, you should use just the leg bag to drain your urine. You should empty your leg bag every three to four hours or sooner if it is more than half full.



### To empty the leg bag

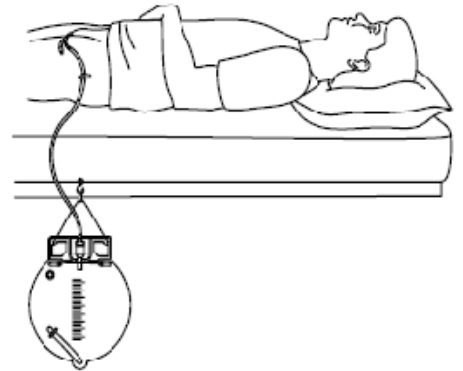
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Stand or sit near a toilet or sink.
- Loosen the strap closest to your ankle so that the bag hangs over the toilet.
- Open the clamp at the end of the bag however be careful not to touch the drain port with your fingers or let the drain port touch the toilet.
- Drain the urine out of the leg bag until it is empty.
- Close the clamp.
- Reattach the leg bag.
- Wash your hands with soap and water

### To change to the night drainage bag

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Remove the cap at the end of the night bag's tubing.  
(Remember to keep this so that you can put it back on when you disconnect the two bags the following day)
- Attach the night bag port to the end of the day bag – Close the clamp at the end of the night bag and open the clamp to the day bag.
- Remove the straps holding the day bag in place.

## How do I use a night drainage bag?

The night drainage bag is larger than the leg bag and holds more urine. If you are using safety pins to fasten the bag to your bed sheet, make sure the safety pin goes into the holes already in the bag for that purpose and not through it. Leave some slack in the tube so the catheter will not be pulled when you move your leg. You need to keep your urine collection bag below the level of your bladder. Whenever you are spending a lot of time lying down or sitting still, the night bag will work better. The night bag should always be used at night while you are sleeping.



## To empty the night drainage bag

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Stand or sit near a toilet.
- Open the clamp at the end of the bag.
- Do not touch the drain port with your fingers or let the drain port touch the toilet seat.
- Drain the urine out of the night bag until empty.
- Close the clamp at the end of the night bag and close the clamp at the end of the day bag.
- Remove the night bag and replace the cap.
- Wash your hands with soap and water again.

## Cleaning the night time catheter bag

After emptying the night bag and disconnecting it ready for the daytime it will need to be cleaned and stored in a clean, dry place.

Wash the inside and outside of the bag with warm soapy water and rinse until the water has no more suds in it. Dry as much as possible and store the bag as above.

NB: If the bag becomes smelly – clean it with a solution of white vinegar and water; for a ratio of 1-4. This will deodorize the bag, do not use bleach.

## How do I fix problems with my urinary catheter?

If you see that your catheter is not draining urine, check the following:

- Is the urine tubing twisted or bent? If it is, straighten out the tubing.
- Are you lying on the catheter tubing? If you are, move the tubing.
- Is the urine collection bag below the level of your bladder (waist level)? If it isn't, lower the level of the urine collection bag until it is below the level of your bladder (waist level). If your urine is still not draining - see the "When should I contact the specialist" section.

## How will my urinary catheter feel?

The end of your penis where the catheter comes out may not feel comfortable. Make sure to be gentle when washing. If the tip of your penis gets sore, try applying some water-based lubricant, such as plain K-Y Jelly, to keep the catheter from sticking. Do not use any other lotion, cream, or ointment before consulting Dr Studd.

## Are there side effects from having a urinary catheter?

Side effects are different from person to person. Some people have no or very mild side effects. The good news is that there are ways to deal with most of these. There are several side effects that you may experience if you have a urinary catheter. They are as follows;

- Bladder spasms
- Blood in your urine
- Infection

**Bladder spasms** – This may feel like bad cramps or pains in the abdomen or in your rectum and can hurt. These spasms may be caused by the catheter bothering your bladder. If you have a bladder spasm, sometimes urine will leak around your catheter. Oxybutynin tablets are effective at relieving bladder spasm.

**Blood in your urine** - It is normal for the urine draining from your catheter to have some small blood clots. This is very common if you have had prostate cancer surgery. Your urine can also become blood-tinged from time to time. On occasions clots can block the holes that allow urine to drain from the catheter - If this occurs it may require flushing. It is important for you to drink plenty of fluids when you have a catheter, this will help flush out your bladder and prevent blockages from occurring.

### **Urinary tract infections -**

1. It is important that you clean the skin around your catheter tubing and your catheter at least two times each day.
2. Keep your urine collection bag below your bladder (waist level).

Keeping the bag below your bladder will help stop the urine from flowing back into your bladder from the collection bag.

## **When should I contact the specialist?**

You should contact Dr Studd if:

- There is no urine flowing into your collection bag over a period of four hours and your catheter is not kinked.
- There is no urine flowing into your collection bag over a period of a couple of hours, and you feel like your bladder is full.
- Leakage around the catheter is persistent and painful.
- You see an increase of blood in your urine or large clots.

You should also call Dr Studd if you have:

- A fever of 38 C or chills
- Pain in your abdomen or lower back
- Bladder spasms that are persistent and troublesome
- Foul smelling drainage around your catheter
- Pain at the tip of your penis that isn't improving after using plain KY jelly