

Care of Your Indwelling Foley Catheter and Urinary Drainage Bag

An indwelling Foley catheter is a soft, rubber tube that continuously drains urine from the bladder. The tube is held in place by a small balloon that is filled with sterile water. It is important to properly care for your catheter to help prevent bladder infections.

As part of your catheter care at home, you will learn how to use and care for the leg bag, night urinary drainage bag and how to change these bags. The catheter is recommended to be changed every month unless your provider tells you otherwise.

Supplies

You will need the following:

- Tape or catheter strap
- Chlorine bleach/vinegar
- Water
- Leg bag with extension tubing
- Alcohol swabs (cotton balls saturated with alcohol may be substituted)
- Night urinary drainage bag
- Irrigation set (or a turkey baster designated for this purpose) for cleaning the bags
- Please see handout for “Caring for your leg bag, discharge instructions.”

Instructions for Cleaning Your Catheter and Perineum

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before cleaning the catheter. At least once a day, gently wash the skin around the catheter using a washcloth with mild soap and water and rinse well. You may need to wash more often if you have a lot of drainage. You may also clean your catheter while you are taking a shower.
2. Wash the first 6 inches of the catheter and tubing from the insertion site outward. Any crusted drainage on the catheter should be removed.
3. Males who have not been circumcised should pull the foreskin back to clean the catheter site and the area under the foreskin. Then return the foreskin to the usual position after cleaning and rinsing well to prevent swelling.

4. Wash the entire perineum (for men, the area between the scrotum and rectum; for women, the area between the urinary opening and rectum) from the front to the back toward the rectum. Rinse with water and dry well. You should also wash this area after each bowel movement.
5. Between washes, keep all areas as dry as possible to prevent rashes or skin breakdown.
6. Avoid pulling on the catheter. To reduce movement of the tubing in the urinary canal and keep it from pulling out, the catheter should be strapped or taped to the thigh.
7. The catheter tubing should not be clamped for any reason.

Leg Bag and Night Drainage Bag

- A leg bag may be used when you are up and out of bed. Gently strap the leg bag to your thigh or lower leg. (See package insert.) The extension tubing that comes with your leg bag can be attached between the catheter and leg bag for added length.
- Use the night drainage bag when you are lying down or sleeping.
- The Foley and drainage tubing should not be clamped for any reason.
- Keep the drainage bags below the level of the bladder to prevent backflow of urine.
- Before disconnecting the catheter from the drainage bag, clean the junction of the tubes with a fresh alcohol swab (or cotton balls saturated with alcohol).
- When reconnecting the tubes, clean the tube ends again with a fresh alcohol swabs (or cotton balls soaked with alcohol).
- Every 2 hours, while awake, check the tubing for kinks and make certain that there is urine in the bag. Gently straighten the kinks to prevent pressure on the bladder.
- Every 8 hours (or when the bag is $\frac{2}{3}$ full), empty the urine through the drainage spout.
- It is recommended that you replace your leg and bedside bag at least once a month.

Prepare Cleaning Solution

1. Pour 150 milliliters (ml) (5 ounces) of cold water into a clean container.
2. Add one tablespoon of non-perfumed liquid bleach to the container (i.e. Purex[®], Clorox[®] or generic non-perfumed bleach containing 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite).

Instructions for Cleaning the Drainage Bags

Refer to “Caring for your leg bag, discharge instructions.”

Clean the drainage bags and tubing daily after you empty all the urine from the bags:

1. Wash the outside of the bag and tubing with warm, soapy water.
2. Add about 2 cups of cold water into your bag (use syringe, turkey baster, or water faucet).
3. Shake the bag vigorously while slowly counting to 10.
4. Empty the water from the bag into the toilet by releasing the clamp.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4. Rinsing must be done twice.
6. Fill the bag with approximately 150 (ml) (5 ounces) of the cleaning solution (bleach and water as described above).
7. Swish the cleaning solution around in the bag while slowly counting to 30.

8. Drain the cleaning solution into the toilet.
9. Add about 1 cup of cold water to the bag.
 10. Swish the water around in the bag while counting to 30.
 11. Drain the water into the toilet.
 12. Hang the bag and allow it to air dry until the next use.
 13. Never leave urine in the bag when it is not in use.



Tell your doctor or nurse if you have any of the following:

- Temperature over 100.5° F
- No urine in the bag for two hours
- Unrelieved feeling of fullness in the bladder area
- Burning feeling or pain from catheter site
- Change in appearance or odor of the urine

If you have questions or concerns, please contact your doctor.

Resources

Medline Plus

A service of the US National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000142.htm>

Accessed February 23, 2015