



## Patient Information

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### What is a Urinary Catheter?

A urinary catheter is a tube inserted to drain urine from your bladder. It is usually inserted where you usually pass urine (a 'urethral catheter') but can also be inserted into your bladder from your abdomen (a 'suprapubic catheter').

A small balloon located at the tip of the catheter is inflated following insertion to help keep the catheter in place. The catheter is connected to a urinary drainage bag.

### Leg Urinary Drainage Bag

A sterile leg bag is connected to the catheter to collect urine. The leg bag is secured to your upper thigh or calf with Velcro straps; this allows you to move freely, prevents discomfort and assists in concealing it under your clothes.

Tube from bladder attached to the leg bag.

Attached to the thigh with Velcro straps.

The leg bag will require regular emptying. As it holds approximately 500mls of urine, aim to empty every 3 - 4 hours or before the bag becomes too full to drain. The leg bag must be changed to a new sterile leg bag every seven (7) days. **Do not re-use disposable leg bags.**



### Night Drainage Bag

At night a larger volume bag or night bag can be linked directly to the end of the leg bag.

This means you may not need to get up overnight to empty the bag. Connection from the leg bag to the overnight bag for overnight drainage



## Emptying the Leg Bag

The leg bag needs to be emptied every 3 - 4 hours either into the toilet or a container designated only for this purpose.

1. Perform hand hygiene e.g. wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water and dry them with a clean towel.
2. Hold the leg bag over the toilet or container and open the outlet valve. Avoid the leg bag touching the toilet.
3. Drain the leg bag and close the outlet valve
4. Perform hand hygiene





## Connecting the Overnight Bag

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Using a new/sterile night bag, remove the cap from the tubing
3. Insert the end into the bottom of the leg bag. *N.B. ensure that the drainage outlet on the night bag is closed.*
4. Open the leg bag valve outlet (where the leg bag connects to the overnight bag), this allows the urine to flow into the night bag.
5. Ensure the night bag is below the level of your bladder for drainage overnight. You can either hang it on the bed frame, place it on a stand or sit on the ground next to the bed (if you're concerned about leakage, place the overnight bag in a clean bucket).
6. Perform hand hygiene

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## Disconnecting the Overnight Bag

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Close outlet valve on leg bag
3. Empty the night bag, and with a twist action gently pull the night bag out of the leg back to disconnect.
4. Discard bag into general rubbish
5. Perform hand hygiene

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## Connecting the Sterile Leg Bag

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Clean the connection of the catheter and the leg bag.
3. Remove the plastic cap from the tip of the new (sterile) leg bag tubing and immediately connect it to the drainage port of your catheter.
4. Gently pinch the end of the catheter to prevent urine leakage and pull/twist the tubing of the drainage bag to disconnect from the catheter

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5. Push the end of the new drainage bag into the catheter (do not touch or contaminate the connecting ends)
6. Secure the drainage bag to leg/thigh using Velcro straps at upper and lower ends of the leg bag
7. Discard used leg bag into general rubbish
8. Perform hand hygiene

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## Contact your Doctor if:

- A complication associated with a urinary catheter is infection. This is because the catheter provides a direct route for bacteria to enter the bladder
- If you have any of the following symptoms contact your doctor: Fever, shivering, chills, cloudy or smelly urine, increased blood or sediment.
- Urine drainage stops
- Persistent blood is visible in urine or urine is persistently dark
- Persistent leakage occurs at catheter entry site
- Pain or abdominal discomfort is evident



## Points to remember:

- Always ensure that your catheter is supported with a catheter strap
- Do not disconnect the leg bag from the catheter while showering
- Make sure the catheter and drainage bag are supported when showering; leg straps can stay in place and changed to dry ones afterwards
- Check the drainage bag is always lower than your bladder
- Avoid using powder or deodorant near the catheter entry site
- Empty the leg bag approximately every 3-4 hours during the day or before it becomes too full to drain
- Always use a sterile leg bag to attach to the catheter
- If the bag should accidentally become disconnected from the catheter replace with a new bag
- Ensure the tubing is not bent or kinked
- It is important to drink between 2 and 2.5 litres of water per day (unless your doctor advises differently)
- Check the catheter bag is not blocked – squeezing the tubing of the catheter can sometimes dislodge any debris
- Avoid constipation (ask nursing staff if unsure how to best manage this)
- Avoid contamination of the catheter following bowel motions
- Always wash your hands before and after attending to your catheter or after emptying your drainage bag(s).

## Ongoing care:

1. Indwelling Catheter (IDC)
  - Your IDC will be changed routinely by a community health nurse if your Doctor orders it to be
2. Supra pubic catheter (SPC). Specific additional instructions will be given to you regarding ongoing care of your SPC
  - If there is a stitch at the SPC insertion site it will be removed by the community health nurse on day 10 after insertion
  - The first change of the SPC is attended by a continence nurse and then routinely afterwards by a community health nurse.