

Common Problems

Leaking – the catheter may be pulling. Try taping the catheter to your leg with a small amount of slack to allow movement.

Feeling of fullness in bladder – if you see no flow for more than 2 hours and you feel the need to urinate, a blockage in the tubing may have occurred. Check to make sure there are no kinks in the tubing. You can move the tubing up and down. If there is still no urine being drained, call your physician.

Bladder Spasms – Sometimes people with a catheter may experience contractions of the bladder. They can feel like a burning in the lower abdomen, a sudden strong urge to urinate, a sudden urge to have a bowel movement, or leakage of urine around the catheter. If you have symptoms of bladder spasms, and you do not have a prescription for this, call your doctor to let him/her know how you are feeling.

Notify the doctor or seek help at the nearest Emergency Department if:

- Catheter is pulled out
- Increased amount of bright red bleeding
- Foul smelling or thick yellow greenish discharge from around the catheter
- No urine draining into the catheter bag over a period of four hours
- Urine is cloudy or foul smelling
- Temperature above 38°C or 100°F.
- Lower abdominal pain or pain in the pelvis

**If you cannot contact your doctor,
go to the nearest Emergency Department.**

Care at Home For a Urinary Catheter

Foley Catheter:

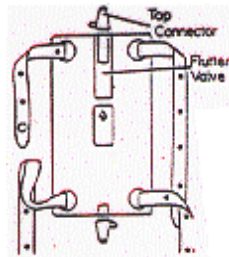
A soft rubber tube that is placed into the bladder to drain urine away. It is held into place by a balloon and connected to a drainage bag.

Suprapubic Catheter:

A tube that is inserted during surgery into the top of the bladder through your lower abdomen (belly).

General Guidelines:

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling your catheter, tube and collection bag.
- You may shower with your catheter in place. Avoid extremely hot or cold water.
- Do not tug or pull catheter.
- Check the tube for kinks and for loops to make sure the urine has a clear and easy pathway to the collection bag.
- Do not lie or sit on the catheter tube or collection bag.
- Make sure the collection bag is below the level of the bladder at all times.
- Wash the area around your Foley catheter with soap and water twice a day. Patients with a Suprapubic catheter should follow their Doctor's instructions for cleansing.
- Do not use powders or lotions around the catheter.

**Nutrition**

- Drink 8-10 glasses of water daily unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- Increase fiber in your diet to avoid constipation.

How to change the Collection Bags

1. Wash your hands thoroughly.
2. Remove cap from the top of the leg bag. Place the cap on a table with the opening facing up.
3. Swab the connector with an alcohol sponge.
4. Disconnect the catheter tubing from the large drainage bag while squeezing the catheter tubing firmly to prevent leakage.
5. Firmly attach the urinary catheter to the leg bag.
6. Secure the leg bag to the leg with elastic straps:
 - Place the rubber straps into the slits at the top and bottom of the bag.
 - The top and bottom strap must go under the bag against your skin.
 - Attach the straps securely around your leg and make sure the bag is not so low on your leg that you feel the catheter pulling.
7. When you have changed bags, rinse the bag not in use with water. Soak the bag in a solution of 2 parts vinegar to 3 parts water for 30 minutes, 3 times a week.
8. Use a new catheter drainage bag every week and discard the old one.

How to empty the urinary drainage bag

1. Open the clamp/cap at the bottom of the urinary drainage bag and empty into the toilet.
2. Empty the leg bag at least every 3-4 hours.
 - Do not allow leg bag to become over $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
 - The night bag will hold more urine and may only need to be emptied in the morning.
3. If your doctor has asked you to measure your urine, record the date, time and amount of urine.

Urine

- Following surgery, blood in your urine is normal. The color of your urine should progress from red to brownish red to amber to yellow.
- Vitamins and certain medications may change the color of your urine