

Care of a Foley Catheter

A Foley catheter is a tube that is put into the bladder to drain urine out of the body. A Foley catheter can stay in the bladder for hours or weeks.

Having the catheter put in

1. You will be asked to lie down.
2. The nurse will clean the skin around the opening where urine comes out of your body.
3. The catheter is put into the opening and gently pushed into your bladder.
4. When the catheter reaches the bladder, a small balloon at the tip is filled with sterile water. The balloon holds the catheter in place to keep it from coming out of the bladder.
5. The catheter is connected to a bag that will collect your urine.
6. The bag is attached to your bed or clothing.

Care while you have the catheter

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after caring for your catheter.
- Clean the skin around the catheter each day.
- Clean the skin and catheter after every bowel movement.
- Keep the urine bag below waist level to prevent urine from flowing back into your bladder from the tubing and urine bag. Backflow of urine can cause an infection.
- Wear **cotton underwear** to allow for air flow and drying in your genital area.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water or other liquids each day. Avoid drinks with caffeine, such as tea, coffee and colas.
- Do not pull on the tubing. Do not step on the tubing when walking. You may want to clip or pin the tubing to your clothing. Make sure the safety pin goes around the catheter and not through it.
- When getting into bed, hang the urine bag beside the bed or on the frame of the bed. Be sure to keep the bag below waist level.
- Keep the tubing free of kinks or loops.
- Only take the catheter and tubing apart to change the urine bag.

How to clean around your catheter

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Clean the skin near the catheter. Take a clean washcloth and moisten with warm water and soap. Gently wash around your urinary opening.
3. Hold the end of the catheter to keep it from being pulled. Wash around the catheter to remove any blood, crust or mucus.
4. Wash the area around your anus with a washcloth and warm water.
5. Pat the genital area dry with a clean towel.
6. Tape the catheter to your upper leg to prevent it from being pulled out. Make sure there is enough tubing so the catheter will not be pulled when you move your leg.

Measuring the urine from your urine bag

Empty the urine bag when it is 2/3 full or at least every 8 hours.

1. If you are to record the amount of urine, place a measuring container on the floor next to you. If you are not to keep a record of the amount, you can empty the urine into the toilet.
2. Remove the drain spout from its holder on the bottom of the urine bag without touching its tip. Open the clamp on the spout.
3. Let the urine flow out of the urine bag into the container or toilet. Do not let the drain tube touch anything.
4. When the bag is empty, clean the end of the drain spout with water and tissue. Close the clamp and put the drain spout into its holder at the bottom of the urine bag.
5. If you are to measure the amount, record how much urine is in the container. Empty the measuring container into the toilet. Rinse it with clean water.

Changing and cleaning your urine bag

1. Get a new or clean urine bag with tubing.
2. Put a clamp on the catheter tubing near the end that connects to the urine bag tube.
3. Remove the catheter from the tubing to the old bag.
4. Clean the ends of the new bag tubing and catheter with alcohol before putting them back together.
5. Connect the catheter to the new bag.
6. Open the clamp on the catheter tubing.
7. Rinse the old bag with warm water.

8. Fill the bag with 2 parts white vinegar to 3 parts tap water. Leave the water and vinegar mixture in the bag for at least 20 minutes. You may use chlorine bleach instead of the vinegar.
9. Empty and rinse the bag. Hang it upside down and let it air dry.
10. When the bag is dry, store it in a clean plastic bag until you are ready to use it again.

Removing your catheter

Your doctor or nurse will remove your catheter when it is no longer needed. A syringe will be used to remove the water from the balloon inside your bladder. The catheter will then be gently pulled out.

Problem Solving

- If your catheter is not draining:
 - Check to see if the tubing is twisted or bent.
 - See if you are lying on the catheter or tubing.
 - Make sure the urine bag is below waist level.
- If your catheter comes out or is leaking:
 - Place a towel or waterproof pad under you.
 - Do not try to put the catheter back in.

Call your doctor **right away** if:

- Your catheter comes out or is leaking.
- Your urine changes to be thick or more cloudy, or there is more mucus or blood in it.
- Your urine has a strong foul odor.
- No urine has drained from your catheter in 6-8 hours.
- You have pain or burning in your urethra, bladder, abdomen or lower back.
- You have shaking or chills or your temperature is over 101 degrees F or 38 degrees C.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.