

Suprapubic Catheter

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A suprapubic catheter is a rubber tube with a tiny balloon on the end, used to drain urine from the bladder. This catheter is put in your bladder through a small opening in the lower centre part of your abdomen, right above your pubic bone.

How to Care for Your Catheter

Cleaning your skin and the outside of the catheter:

1. Clean your skin around the catheter opening every day. This can be done during your usual bath routine.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water.
3. Clean the area around the opening with a clean washcloth and soapy water or use a wet cotton bud to clean around the site if crusty. **Do not** pull on the tube.
4. Gently clean the outside of the catheter with mild soap and water.
5. Gently rotate the catheter at the insertion site 360° each day.
6. Pat the area dry with a clean towel or allow to air dry for ten minutes.
7. Your caregiver may want you to put a bandage (*dressing*) over the site. **Do not** use ointment on this area unless your caregiver tells you to.

Emptying the catheter – empty every 3-4 hours:

- A. If you have a flip-flo valve attached, then clean your hands with soap and water or antibacterial hand gel, and hold the tap over the toilet or empty container. Open the tap to allow the urine to flow out. When the urine stops flowing close the tap. Discard the urine and clean hands/.
- B. If you have a leg bag attached to the catheter, hold the bag over the toilet or another container/ Release the valve (*spigot*) at the bottom of the bag. **Try not** to touch the opening of the spigot. **Do not** let the opening touch the toilet or container. Close the spigot tightly when the bag is empty.

Emptying the collection bag:

- You may have a large drainage bag to use at night and a smaller one for daytime. Empty the large bag every 8 hours. Empty the small bag every 3-4 hours or earlier if full.
- Keep the drainage bag below the level of the catheter. This stops urine from flowing backwards.
- As above, hold the bag over the toilet or another container/ Release the valve (*spigot*) at the bottom of the bag. **Try not** to touch the opening of the spigot. **Do not** let the opening touch the toilet or container. Close the spigot tightly when the bag is empty.

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Cleaning the collection bag:

- Clean the bag every few days.
- First, wash your hands.
- Disconnect the tubing from the catheter. Replace the used bag with a new bag. Then you can clean the used one.
- Empty the used bag completely. Rinse it out with warm water and soap or fill the bag with water and add 1 teaspoon of vinegar. Let it sit for 30 minutes. Then drain. OR use Milton's solution (follow directions on packet).
- The bag should be completely dry before storing it. Put it inside a plastic bag to keep it clean.

Checking everything:

- Always make sure there are no kinks in the catheter or tubing.
- Always make sure there are no leaks in the catheter, tubing, or collection bag.

How to Change Your Catheter

Sometimes, a caregiver will change your suprapubic catheter. Other times, you may need to change it yourself. This may be the case if you need to wear a catheter for a long time. Usually, they need to be changed every 4 to 6 weeks. Ask your caregiver how often yours should be changed.

Your caregiver will help you order the following supplies for home delivery:

- Sterile gloves.
- Catheters.
- Syringes.
- Sterile water.
- Sterile cleaning solution.
- Lubricant.
- Drainage bags.

Changing your catheter:

- Drink plenty of fluids before changing the catheter.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Lie on your back and put on sterile gloves.
- Clean the skin around the catheter opening. Use the sterile cleaning solution.
- Use a syringe to get the water out of the balloon from the old catheter.
- Slowly remove the catheter.
- Take off the first pair of gloves, and put on a new pair. Then put lubricant on the tip of the new catheter. Put the new catheter through the opening.
- Wait for some urine to start flowing. Then, use the other syringe to fill the balloon with sterile water.
- Attach the catheter to your drainage bag. Make sure the connection is tight.

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Important warning:

- The catheter should come out easily. If it seems stuck, **do not** pull it.
- Call your caregiver right away if you have any trouble while changing the catheter.
- When the old catheter is removed, the new one should be put in right away. This is because the opening will close quickly. If you have a problem, go to an emergency clinic right away.

Risks and Complications

- Urine flow can become blocked. This can happen if the catheter or tubes are not working right. A blood clot can also block urine flow.
- The catheter might irritate tissue in your body. This can cause bleeding.
- The skin near the opening for the catheter may become irritated or infected.
- Bacteria may get into your bladder. This can cause a urinary tract infection.

Home Care Instructions

- Take all medicines prescribed by your caregiver. Follow the directions carefully.
- Drink 8 glasses of water every day. This produces good urine flow.
- Check the skin around your catheter a few times every day. Watch for redness and swelling. Look for any fluids coming out of the opening.
- **Do not** use powder or cream around the catheter opening.
- **Do not** take tub baths or use pool or hot tubs.
- Keep all follow-up appointments.

Seek Medical Care If:

- You leak urine.
- Your skin around the catheter becomes red or sore.
- Your urine flow slows down.
- Your urine gets cloudy or smelly.

Seek Immediate Medical Care if:

- You have chills, nausea or back pain.
- You have trouble changing your catheter.
- Your catheter comes out.
- You have blood in your urine.
- You have no urine flow for 1 hour.
- You have a fever.