



Going Home with a Foley Catheter

Purpose:

The catheter which you have was inserted in order to drain the urine from your bladder. There is a small balloon at the tip of the catheter which prevents it from falling out. This catheter may be removed whenever your urologist feels it is appropriate, depending on the reason for which the catheter was left in place. It may be removed within a few days, or if necessary, it can stay in place and be changed after one month.

Hygiene:

As part of your daily hygiene routine, clean the portion of the catheter that is just outside your urethra (where it enters your body) using soap and water. Afterwards, rinse the area well and dry.

You may shower.

Uncircumcised men – always return the foreskin over the head of the penis after cleaning. Leaving the foreskin behind the head of the penis may cause swelling and pain.

Females – More frequent hygiene may be necessary during menstruation.

Drainage Bags:

Leg bags – The tubing connected to your catheter should be secured to your thigh at all times. You should always make sure that the tubing is not kinked or pinched off. At the bottom of the bag, there is a small cap which should be closed while it is “in use.” Whenever your bag is nearly full, you can empty the urine from the bag by simply removing this cap near a toilet, and allowing the urine to drain into the bowl. Replace the cap when the bag is empty.

At night time, you can change the bag to the larger “night bag.” This is simply done by separating your catheter from the tubing (pulls apart easily) and plugging your catheter into the tubing that is attached to the larger bag (Note: the larger bag often has a “cap” on the end of its tube which must be removed prior to plugging it into your foley catheter). This larger bag will take longer to fill up, and you will therefore not need to empty it during the night.

If at any time you notice that no urine has drained for more than one hour, make sure that you are drinking adequate liquids. If this persists despite increases in your liquid intake, call your urologist.

Bag care – Your drainage bags can be washed with soap and water, rinsed with a solution of one part vinegar and one part water, and allowed to dry. Do not use hot water, as this causes plastic to retain odors.

Fluid Intake:

Provided that you are not restricted with fluids by your physician, you should drink 6-8 (8 ounce) glasses of fluid per day.

Activity:

You should not allow the catheter to restrict your activity. Moving about and walking are important.