

Department of Urology

How to look after your urinary catheter valve at home

Introduction

Your doctor or nurse has explained to you that you are to go home with a urinary catheter. This may be a long term solution to your urinary problems or a short term measure for a certain period of time following which you will return to the hospital to have the catheter removed.

What is a catheter valve?

A catheter valve is similar to a tap and it fits onto the end of your urinary catheter. Your bladder will continually store urine and can then be emptied on a regular basis (every 2-3 hours) by opening the valve. The catheter valve can be used as an alternative to drainage bags. This may allow you to walk around more freely and give you greater dignity.

Catheter Valves

There are many types of catheter valves available through your GP or District Nurse and it is important that you choose the right one to suit you.

- The catheter valve connects to your urinary catheter and can be attached if you wish to your thigh by an elastic strap (the nursing staff on the ward will show you how to do this) or it can be placed in your underwear.
- When opening the catheter valve you must always make sure that you have washed your hands first.
- You may empty the urine directly into the toilet or into a clean container dependent on your personal preference.
- Once you are comfortably positioned open the drainage tap (this may be a slide action tap or a lever).
- Do not touch the drainage port with the container or toilet seat. Remember to close the tap once your bladder is empty and then wash your hands.
- You should open the catheter valve whenever you feel the need to pass urine, before you go to bed at night and first thing in the morning.
- It is recommended that you should empty your bladder at least every three hours during the day.

Connecting a catheter valve to a urine drainage bag

If you wish, during the night, a two litre capacity bag (similar to the one used whilst you were in hospital) can be attached to the catheter valve, allowing for an undisturbed nights sleep and continuous urine drainage.



Patient Information

- To do this loosen or remove any straps that are used to secure the catheter and valve. Connect the tubing of the night drainage bag to the drainage port of the catheter valve and open the drainage tap.
- Place the night drainage bag at the foot or the side of the bed, remembering to keep it below the level of your bladder.
- Catheter stands or hangers are available. Contact your GP or District Nurse for further information.
- In the morning simply close the catheter valve and secure once again around your leg if desired.
- Disposable non-drainable bags are available on prescription. It is recommended that you change the catheter valve on a weekly basis.
- To do this, wash and dry your hands thoroughly and empty your bladder.
- Clamp the urinary catheter closed by squeezing or pinching.
- Using a twisting and pulling motion disconnect the catheter valve from the urinary catheter and connect the new valve.
- Dispose of the used catheter valve in the household rubbish making sure it is in a sealed plastic bag.

General advice

- When dealing with your urinary catheter always remember to wash and dry your hands before and after.
- Drink plenty of fluids to flush out your system.
- Eat a well balanced diet - constipation can sometimes place extra pressure on your bladder and cause some urine to leak.

Potential problems

Occasionally some urine may leak around the sides of the urinary catheter. This could be because the catheter is too small, blocked or you are having bladder spasms. Check that there is urine draining.

If problems continue or you develop any of the following symptoms please contact your District Nurse or GP as soon as possible:

- Strong smelling cloudy looking urine
- Fever / temperature
- Swelling around the catheter
- Bleeding around the catheter
- Blood in your urine
- No urine drainage

If your urinary catheter is for the long term a further change of catheter may be required in approximately 10 - 12 weeks time. This will be performed by a District Nurse in your own home. Alternatively your consultant may arrange for the catheter to be removed after a certain period of time.

If this is the case you will be informed that an appointment has been made for you to attend the hospital as a day case shortly after discharge.

Patient Information

Equipment

If you require more equipment, i.e. catheter valves or drainage bags, please contact your GP or District Nurse. If you require a catheter stand for night time, these are available from the District Nurse, a chemist or can be purchased on Amazon.

For further information please contact:

The Urology Clinical Nurse Specialist Team: Tel 024 7696 5373.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 5149 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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