

Urology

Bladder spasms

It is usual to experience feelings of wanting to pass urine naturally when a urinary catheter is in place. Bladder spasms are uncontrolled, sometimes painful contractions of the bladder which cause a sudden urge to urinate. This occasionally results in some leakage of urine or bypassing around the catheter.

Bladder spasms occur when the smooth muscle of the bladder contracts and does not allow the bladder to expand as it fills with urine. Possible causes for bladder spasms can be:

- A urinary tract infection (UTI)
- A water filled balloon holding the catheter in place in the bladder
- A catheter that is causing pulling on the bladder neck because it is not secured correctly.
- A blocked catheter

Prevention and management of bladder spasms

- The best thing to do if you get the feeling that you want to pass urine naturally whilst you have the catheter in place is to relax and let the catheter do the work for you.
- Try not to push the urine out - this will increase the pressure in your abdomen, which will then push onto your bladder and cause the catheter to leak.
- Secure the catheter to your leg firmly to prevent pulling and avoid movement



Patient Information

- Assess the catheter for urine flow. There should be no kinks in the tubing, as this can cause the catheter not to drain properly and therefore cause leakage

If you find that these bladder spasms don't stop, you should contact your GP or District Nurse for further assistance.

It may be possible to reduce the volume of water in the balloon that is holding the catheter in place. Sometimes, the inflated balloon can irritate the bladder or bladder neck. There is also medicine available that can help to calm the bladder down to relieve the symptoms.

If you are not sure, please contact Sarah Roth - Clinical Nurse Specialist for Continence and Urology on 02476 965296 for further information and advice.

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