

# How to Care for an Indwelling Foley Catheter

## For patients who are going home with an indwelling Foley catheter

You are leaving the hospital with an indwelling foley catheter. The catheter connects to a drainage bag that will drain the urine away from your bladder.

Read this pamphlet to learn:

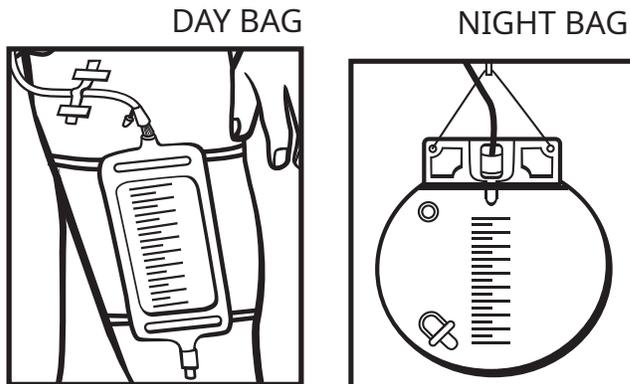
- How to care for the catheter at home
- How to wear the drainage bag at night
- Problems to watch for



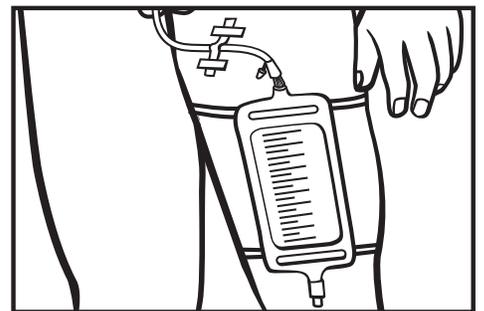
## How to wear the drainage bag during the day

The smaller “leg” or “day” bag can be easily worn under your clothes.

- Empty the drainage bag when it becomes half full directly into the toilet.
- Always wash your hands to reduce the chance of infection.



- It's a good idea to tape the catheter to your thigh with non-allergenic tape. Remember to leave a little slack in the catheter so it doesn't pull when you stand up or walk.
- The straps on the leg bag should not be too tight that it leaves a mark on your leg (like a tight sock would).
- Try not to strap the leg bag to a leg with poor blood circulation. Each day, change the leg you wear the leg bag on.



## How to wear the drainage bag at night

To switch from the day bag to the night bag:

1. Pinch off the catheter near its end with one hand and wiggle the connecting end of the drainage bag out of the catheter.
2. Insert the connecting end of the night bag into the catheter.
3. After you remove the drainage bag, rinse it out with tap water and hang it up to dry. You can also rinse it with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of vinegar everyday to freshen the bag.

The night bag should rest below the level of the bladder to drain properly. You can place it on the floor on a towel or use the clip attached to the drainage tubing to attach to the linen on the side of your bed.

## Daily care of your indwelling catheter

1. Wash around the catheter 2 times a day with plain soap and water to help prevent infection.
2. Drink about 1 litre (4 cups) of fluid a day (water is best).
  - Men can put a small amount of polysporin ointment around the tip of the penis after washing. Pull back the foreskin when washing. Remember to pull the foreskin back over the head of the penis when finished.

## What if blood is leaking outside the catheter?

Don't worry if you notice urine and/or blood leaking around the outside of the catheter, especially when you change position or have bowel movements. This is called a **bladder spasm** and is quite common. Bladder spasms usually go away after 1 to 2 minutes. But you may feel them from time to time while you have the catheter.

The doctor will let you know if you need to go home with a prescription for antibiotics and when to return to have the catheter removed.



### Problems to watch for

Contact your doctor if:

- urine is not draining into the bag and your bladder begins to feel full
- you develop chills
- you have a fever (higher than 38 °C or 101 °F)
- you have a burning feeling that does not go away

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