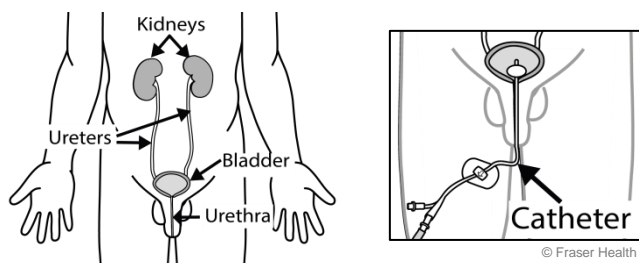


# Going Home with a Urinary Catheter after Surgery

## Instructions to care for and remove your catheter

You have a urinary catheter. It drains urine from your bladder into a bag through a tube. A small, water-filled balloon at the end of the tube holds it inside your bladder. The tube is connected to a bag for the urine to drain into.



Having a urinary catheter can put you at risk of getting an infection. It is important to read and understand this information so you can lessen the chances of getting an infection.

### Caring for yourself at home

- Drink 2 to 3 litres (8 to 10 glasses) of fluid each day (People with heart or kidney problems should check with their family doctor about the correct amount of fluid to drink each day).
- Check the tubing for kinks every 2 to 3 hours during the day.
- Keep the drainage bag below the level of your bladder (waist).
- Empty the drainage bag into the toilet or clean a container. Do not let the tube touch the toilet or container. Remember to close the clamp after you empty the bag.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water before and after touching the urinary catheter and bag.
- Wash the area around the catheter with soap and water at these times:
  - **every night** (or morning if you shower at night)
  - **after every bowel movement** (poop).
- Use underwear with a cotton crotch lining.
- Try not to wear tight-fitting pants and underwear.
- Do not use any lotion or powder around the catheter.
- Do not pull or tug on the catheter. Leave some slack in the tubing so to keep it from pulling on the catheter.

### For women and people with internal genitals:

- Wash the area where the catheter enters your body and between your legs with soap and water.
- Always clean from the front of where the catheter enters your body to the back.
- Rinse the soap off with a damp cloth and dry with a clean towel.

### For men and people with external genitals:

- Wash your penis carefully with soap and water.
- If not circumcised, pull back and clean under the foreskin.
- Always clean from the front of where the catheter enters your body to the back.
- Rinse the soap off with a damp cloth and dry with a clean towel.

## When to Get Help

Call your doctor or go to your nearest emergency department if you notice **any** of the following:

- Urine is leaking from around the catheter.
- You feel pressure in the bladder area.
- You have new pain in your bladder area and/or in your back (below your ribs).
- There is very little or no urine in the bag for the last 4 hours and your bladder feels full.
- Urine has a foul smell or changes in colour (e.g., cloudy urine, increase in blood and blood clots in urine).
- You generally feel unwell or tired.
- You have chills or a fever over 37.8°C (100.4°F).
- The area where the catheter enters your body is red, swollen, or tender.
- You have changes in the way you think **and** this is new for you.
- You live with a spinal cord injury, and notice **any** of the following:
  - one or more of the signs listed above
  - more muscle spasms than usual headache
  - feeling sick to your stomach
  - feeling tired even after sleeping

## Instructions for Removing Your Catheter

You will need the following supplies:

- 3 Alcohol swabs
  - one 10ml syringe
1. Wash your hands and sit on the toilet.
  2. Open the sterile package and remove the 10ml syringe.
  3. Clean the coloured port of the catheter with an alcohol swab and wait 30 seconds for it to dry.
  4. Insert the syringe into the coloured port of the catheter and turn ¼ turn. Water will fill the syringe.
  5. Empty the syringe into the toilet.
  6. Reinsert it into the coloured port and pull the barrel until no more water comes out into the syringe.
  7. Gently pull the catheter out.
  8. If the catheter does not slide out easily, stop and contact your doctor.
  9. Use the remaining 2 alcohol swabs to remove the stat-lock from your leg. Remove the tape gently.
  10. Throw the bag, tubing, and syringe away.

## What to Expect After Removing Your Catheter

After removing your catheter, you may have:

- some burning when you urinate
- a slow stream of urine
- a small amount of bleeding
- difficulty passing urine

It might help to sit in a tub of warm water or pour warm water over the area.

Call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if you are not able to pass urine and your bladder feels full, and the warm water does not help.