

## Catheter Care Discharge Instructions:

Taking good care of your catheter will keep it working properly and help prevent problems from developing.

### How to wear your catheter and drainage bag:

- **Supplies needed:**
  - Adhesive tape or a leg strap.
  - Alcohol wipe or soap and water (if you use tape).
  - A clean towel (if you use tape).
  - Overnight drainage bag.
  - Smaller drainage bag (*leg bag*).
- Use adhesive tape or a leg strap to attach your catheter to your leg.
- Make sure the catheter is not pulled tight.
- If a leg strap gets wet, replace it with a dry one.
- If you use adhesive tape: Use an alcohol wipe or soap and water to wash off any stickiness on your skin where you had tape before. Use a clean towel to pat-dry the area. Apply the new tape.
- You should have received a large overnight drainage bag and a smaller leg bag that fits underneath clothing.
- You may wear the overnight bag at any time, but you should not wear the leg bag at night.
- Always wear the leg bag below your knee.
- Make sure the overnight drainage bag is always lower than the level of your bladder, but **do not** let it touch the floor. Before you go to sleep, hang the bag inside a wastebasket that is covered by a clean plastic bag.

### How to Care for the Skin Around Your Catheter

- Every day, use a clean washcloth and soapy water to clean the skin around your catheter. Wash your hands with soap and water. Wet a washcloth in warm water and mild soap. Clean the skin around your urethra.
- Only wipe downward on the catheter.
- **Do not** wipe upward toward your body, because that may push bacteria into your urethra and cause infection. Use a clean towel to pat-dry the catheter and the skin around it. Make sure to wipe off all soap. Wash your hands with soap and water.
- **Do not** take baths.
- **Do not** use cream, ointment, or lotion on the area where the catheter enters your body, unless your health care provider tells you to do that.
- **Do not** use powders, sprays, or lotions on your genital area.

- If you are female:
  - Use one hand to gently spread the folds of skin around your vagina (*labia*).
  - With the washcloth in your other hand, wipe the inner side of your labia on each side. Do this in a front-to-back direction.
- If you are male:
  - Use one hand to pull back any skin that covers the end of your penis (*foreskin*).
  - With the washcloth in your other hand, wipe your penis in small circles. Start wiping at the tip of your penis, then move outward from the catheter. With your free hand, hold the catheter close to where it enters your body. Keep holding the catheter during cleaning so it does not get pulled out. Use your other hand to clean the catheter with the washcloth.

### How to Empty the Drainage Bag

- Empty your drainage bag (your overnight drainage bag or your leg bag) when it is  $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$  full, or at least 2–3 times a day. Clean the drainage bag according to the manufacturer's instructions or as told by your health care provider.
  1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
  2. Detach the drainage bag from your leg.
  3. Hold the drainage bag over the toilet or a clean container. Make sure the drainage bag is lower than your hips and bladder. This stops urine from going back into the tubing and into your bladder.
  4. Open the pour spout at the bottom of the bag.
  5. Empty the urine into the toilet or container. **Do not** let the pour spout touch any surface. This precaution is important to prevent bacteria from getting in the bag and causing infection.
  6. Apply rubbing alcohol to a gauze pad or cotton ball.
  7. Use the gauze pad or cotton ball to clean the pour spout.
  8. Close the pour spout.
  9. Attach the bag to your leg with adhesive tape or a leg strap.
  10. Wash your hands with soap and water.

### How to Change the Drainage Bag

- Replace your drainage bag with a clean bag once a month. Replace the bag sooner if it leaks, starts to smell bad, or looks dirty.
  1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
  2. Detach the dirty drainage bag from your leg.
  3. Pinch the catheter with your fingers so that urine does not spill out.
  4. Disconnect the catheter tube from the drainage tube at the connection valve. **Do not** let the tubes touch any surface.
  5. Clean the end of the catheter tube with an alcohol wipe. Use a different alcohol wipe to clean the end of the drainage tube.
  6. Connect the catheter tube to the drainage tube of the clean bag.
  7. Attach the clean bag to your leg with adhesive tape or a leg strap. Avoid attaching the new bag too tightly.
  8. Wash your hands with soap and water.

**Diet:**

- Drink enough fluid to keep your urine pale yellow.

**Follow-Up:**

- You will need to arrange your own first follow-up appointment...the contact information will be given to you before you go home
- Discuss when you can return to work and any restrictions you may have at this appointment

**CALL YOUR SURGEON OR GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM IF YOU HAVE:**

- Your urine is cloudy.
- Your urine smells unusually bad.
- Your catheter gets clogged.
- Your catheter starts to leak.
- Your bladder feels full.
- You have redness, swelling, or pain where the catheter enters your body.
- You have fluid, blood, pus, or a bad smell coming from the area where the catheter enters your body.
- You have pain in your abdomen, legs, lower back, or bladder.
- You see blood in the catheter.
- Your urine is pink or red.
- Your catheter gets pulled out.
- Fever or chills (Temperature of 38.5/101 F or higher)
- Nausea and/or vomiting that is not relieved by an anti-nausea medication (Gravol)
- IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO REACH YOUR SURGEON, go directly to the Emergency Room for medical attention!