



Cleaning Leg Bags and Overnight Bags

This handout explains how to clean and disinfect urinary drainage bags so that you can reuse them.

Bag Care

Empty your bag when it is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ full of urine, or when it gets uncomfortable. The bag should be cleaned every day.

Cleaning Steps

1. Gather the supplies you will need:
 - Irrigating syringe or turkey baster
 - Large basin
 - Liquid soap for washing dishes by hand or liquid hand soap
 - Bleach (Purex, Chlorox, or generic; do not use scented bleach)Or:

You may buy a leg bag or stoma bag disinfectant from your local medical supply store.

 - Warm water
 - 8-ounce (1 cup) measuring cup
2. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
3. Remove the bags and tubing and drain the urine into the toilet.
4. Wash the bags and tubing with a few drops of liquid soap and water. Use a turkey baster or large syringe to put water into the bag.
5. Turn the leg bag upside down to test the flutter valve at the top. Throw away the bag if water drains out the valve.
6. Rinse the bag and tubing under running water.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

UWMC Patients

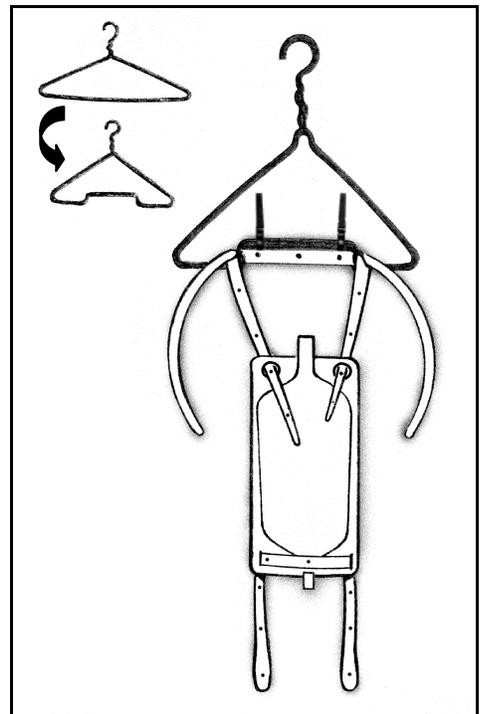
- Rehab Medicine Clinic** patients:
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7. Mix a solution of 1 part bleach and 10 parts water in the basin. For example, for ½ cup bleach, use 5 cups water. If you do not want to use bleach, you can use full-strength distilled white vinegar (5% acidity) instead.*
8. Use the turkey baster or large syringe to fill the bag about half full with the bleach solution or white vinegar.
9. Press out all the air from the bag.
10. Let the bag soak in the basin for at least 15 minutes.
11. Drain the solution from the basin, then drain the solution from the bag.
12. **Completely** rinse the inside and outside of the bag under running water.
13. Hang the bag from a towel bar, hook, or bent hanger to dry (see drawing at right).
14. When the bag is dry, wrap it in a clean towel until needed.

* You may want to use white vinegar instead of bleach if crystals in the bag are a problem. Vinegar will help dissolve the crystals.



Bending the bottom of a wire hanger, as shown in the drawing above, will make it easy to hang the bag to dry. It may also help to use clothes pins or other clips to hold the bag on the hanger.