

Foley Catheter

Using an indwelling urethral (Foley) catheter

This handout explains how to use an indwelling urethral (Foley) catheter for bladder management.

A Foley catheter may be used by people with a spinal cord injury or other conditions that affect how urine empties from their bladder. A Foley is used when other bladder management methods have not worked well.

Because the catheter is left in the bladder all the time, there is a higher risk of urinary tract infections. To help prevent infection, make sure that you and your caregivers follow these instructions carefully.

Instructions

1. Drink at least 2 quarts of fluid every day. Water is the best fluid to drink. Avoid carbonated drinks like soda pop and seltzer. They may irritate your bladder.
2. Always wash your hands with warm water and soap before and after touching your catheter.
3. Wash the area where the catheter enters your body 2 times every day. Rinse any soap off completely. Dry well with a clean towel. Do not use any antiseptic swabs or ointments unless your health care provider tells you to.
4. Use the leg bag and night bag as you were told. For more information, please see the handout "How to Change a Foley Catheter."
5. Change your catheter monthly.

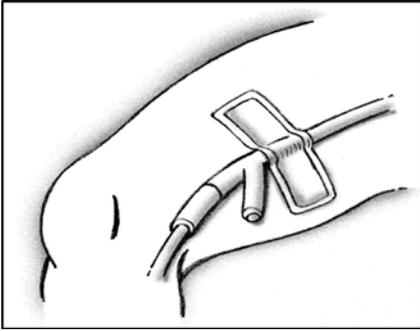


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Type of catheter: _____

When to change it: _____

6. The catheter should be securely taped to your body at all times so that no tension is placed on the catheter. Make sure the skin where you put the tape is clean and dry. You may need to shave the area so the tape will stick well.



Catheter taped to a woman's thigh

For women:

- Tape the catheter to your upper thigh (see drawing at left).
- Alternate which thigh you tape the catheter to so that your skin stays healthy. A good time to do this is when you bathe.

For men:

- Tape the catheter to your belly.
 - Alternate which side of your belly you tape the catheter to so that your skin stays healthy. A good time to do this is when you bathe.
7. Never raise the drainage bag above the level of your bladder. This will keep urine from flowing back into your bladder.
 8. See the handout "Cleaning Leg Bags and Overnight Bags" for instructions for cleaning and disinfecting urinary drainage bags.

Questions?

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

UWMC Rehab Medicine Clinic:
206-598-4295
Box 356157
1959 N.E. Pacific St.
Seattle, WA 98195

HMC Rehab Medicine Clinic: 206-744-2581
Box 359859
325 9th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98104