



# Suprapubic Catheter

## *Basic instructions*

**This handout explains how to use a suprapubic catheter, one type of tube that is used to drain urine from the bladder.**

A *suprapubic* catheter is placed in the bladder through a surgical opening in the abdomen, above the pubic area. The catheter balloon is inflated to keep the catheter in place.

A suprapubic catheter may be used by people who have a spinal cord injury or another neurological condition that prevents emptying of urine from the bladder. It is mostly used by people who have not been able to use other bladder-management methods.

## **Benefits**

Some people may choose to use this type of catheter because it:

- Helps prevent injury to the urethra
- Makes sexual activity more convenient
- Allows them to use a larger bore tube for drainage
- Provides a way to drain the bladder if the urethra cannot be used
- Is easier for some people to change by themselves

## **Risks**

Because the catheter is left in the bladder all the time, there is an increased risk of urinary tract infection.

To help prevent infection, make sure that you and your caregivers follow instructions carefully.

## **Instructions**

1. Drink at least 64 fluid ounces (2,000 ml, or 8 glasses) of fluid a day. Water is the best fluid to drink. Carbonated drinks like soda pop and seltzer may irritate your bladder.

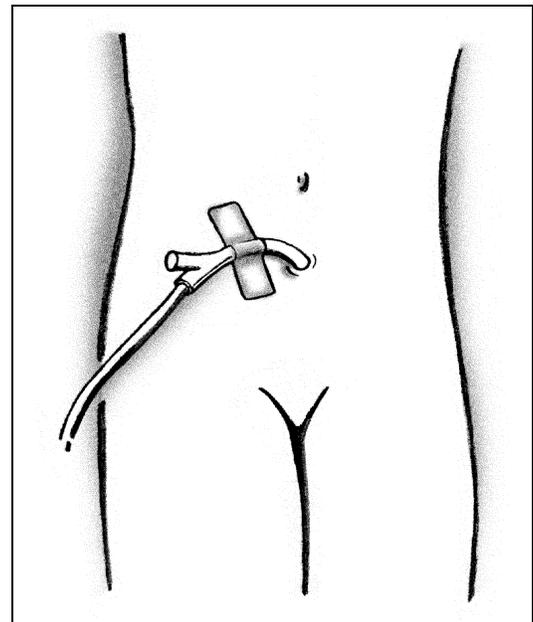
## Questions?

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

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2. Always wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 30 seconds before and after touching your catheter.
3. Twice a day, wash the area where the catheter enters your body. Rinse off soap completely. Dry the area thoroughly.
4. Do not use any antiseptic swabs or ointment unless your health care provider tells you to.
5. Use your leg bag and overnight bag the way you were taught.
6. Change your catheter at least every \_\_\_\_\_ weeks while you are in the hospital and every \_\_\_\_\_ weeks at home.
7. The catheter should be securely taped to your body at all times so that nothing pulls on it. The skin where it is taped should be clean and dry. You may need to shave the area so the tape sticks well. A good place to secure the tape is next to the suprapubic opening, on either side.
8. We also recommend a thigh strap or other device to secure the tubing.
9. Try different types of tape (paper, "silk," etc.) to see what works best for you.
10. Never raise your drainage bag above the level of your bladder. This will keep urine from flowing back into your bladder.



The suprapubic catheter should be securely taped to your body at all times.

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