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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.

Supplies Needed

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, Clorox, or generic; do **not** use scented bleach)

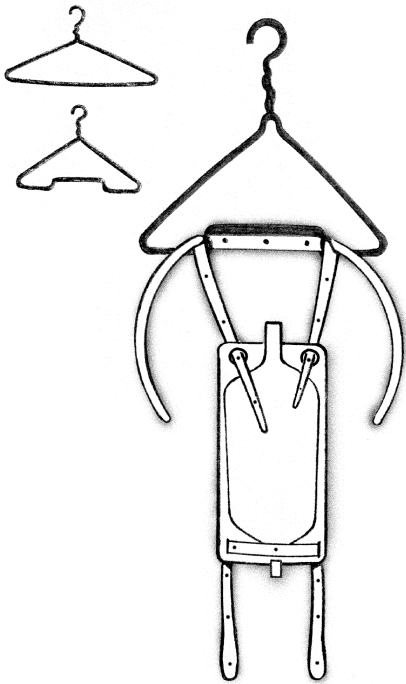
Or:

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

- Warm water
- 8-ounce (1 cup) measuring cup

Cleaning Steps

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
2. Remove the bags and tubing and drain the urine into the toilet.
3. 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.
4. Rinse the outside of the bag and tubing under running water.



Bending the bottom of a wire hanger 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.

5. Mix a solution of 1 part bleach and 10 parts water in the basin. For example, for $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bleach, use 5 cups water. If you do not want to use bleach, you can use a mixture of 1 part vinegar to 4 parts water.
 - Note: You may want to use white vinegar instead of bleach if crystals in the bag are a problem. Vinegar will help dissolve the crystals.
6. Use the turkey baster or large syringe to fill the bag about half full with the bleach solution or white vinegar. Take the stopper out of the syringe. Insert the syringe into the tubing and pour your cleaning solution in through the syringe.
7. Press out all the air from the bag.
8. Let the bag soak in the basin for at least 15 minutes.
9. Drain the solution from the basin, then drain the solution from the bag.
10. Completely rinse the inside and outside of the bag under running water.
11. Hang the bag from a towel bar, hook, or bent hanger to dry (see illustration on the left).
12. When the bag is dry, wrap it in a clean towel until needed.

QUESTIONS?

Your questions are important. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.
