

Caring for My Indwelling Catheter after Gynecology Surgery

Why do I need an indwelling catheter?

We know that no one wants to go home with a catheter, but it is important to protect your bladder while it is healing. This is a temporary step in your recovery.

How can I make sure the catheter keeps working?

1. Always keep the bag below the level of your bladder.
2. Make sure the tube is not kinked and that urine is flowing into the bag.
3. Place the leg bag below your knee. If you place it above the knee, the urine will not drain into the bag as it should.

When should I drain the leg bag?

Drain the leg bag when:

- It is a little more than half full
- It feels heavy on your leg

How do I drain the leg bag?

1. Wash your hands with soap and water
2. Take the bag off your leg

3. Aim the drainage tube toward the toilet (Figure A).



Figure A

4. Open the clamp and let urine drain into the toilet (Figure B).



Figure B

5. When the bag is empty, close the clamp.
6. Dry the end of the drainage tube with some toilet paper.
7. Put the leg bag back on your leg.

When should I drain the overnight bag?

Drain the overnight bag when you first get up in the morning. Usually you will change to the leg bag after you drain the overnight bag. If you continue to use

the overnight bag while you are awake, drain it when it is a little more than half full or is heavy to lift.

How do I drain the overnight bag?

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Lift the bag up and hold it near the toilet.
3. Squeeze the hard, plastic pieces on either side of the drainage tube and pull it out of the clear holder (Figures C and D).



Figure C



Figure D

4. Aim the drainage tube toward the toilet.
5. Open the clamp and let urine drain into the toilet (Figures E and F).



Figure E



Figure F

6. When the bag is empty, close the clamp
7. Push the drainage tube back into the clear holder.

How do I change collection bags?

You will go home with the catheter attached to a leg bag. Before bedtime, switch to an overnight bag so that you are using a bag that will stay below the level of your bladder while you are in bed. It is important to keep the tips clean while changing bags to lower the risk of infection.

Follow these steps to change from a leg bag to an overnight bag:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water
2. Lay clean towel on counter.
3. Put supplies on towel (Figure G):
 - a. Overnight bag
 - b. 3 alcohol swabs with packets opened and swab sitting on the packet
 - c. 1 alcohol swab packet that is pouched open

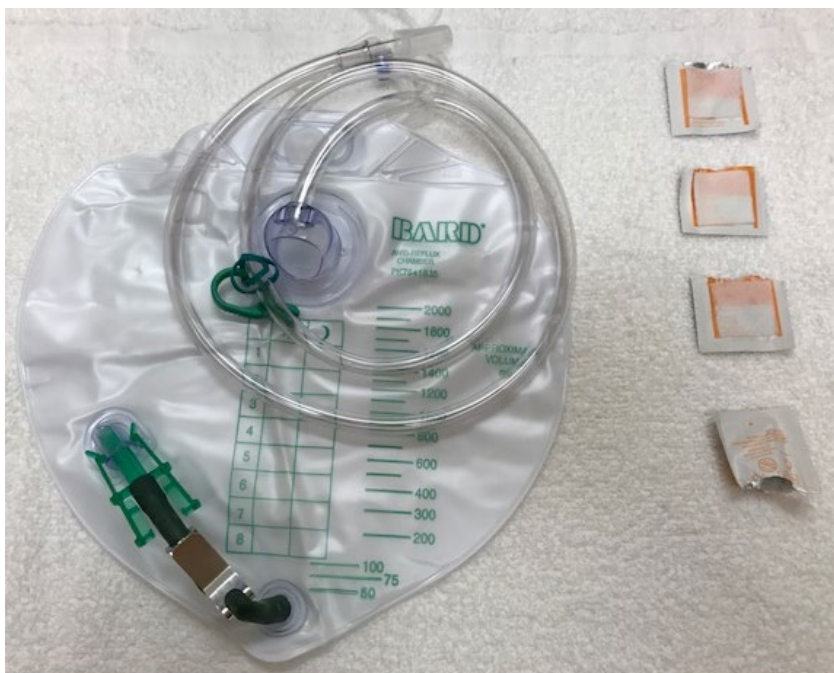


Figure G

4. Remove cap from the connector on the overnight bag. Put it in the pink plastic bin (Figure H).



Figure H

5. Clean the connector with one of the alcohol swabs and then lay it down on another swab (Figures I and J).

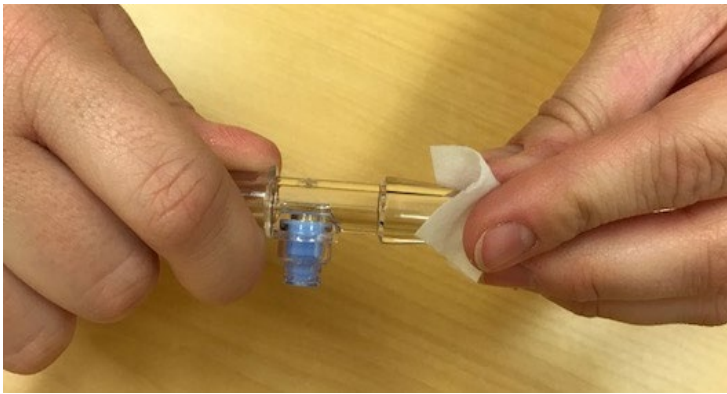


Figure I



Figure J

6. Pinch the catheter tubing shut (Figures K and L).



Figure K



Figure L

7. Remove the connector on the leg bag and place it between your fingers so you can hold it while you do the next two steps (Figure M).



Figure M

8. Push the connector on the overnight bag into the catheter tubing (Figure N).



Figure N

9. Put the overnight bag on the floor. Remember to always keep it below your knee.

10. Clean the connector on the leg bag with an alcohol swab and then put it in the pouched alcohol swab packet and tighten the packet around it (Figures O and P).



Figure O



Figure P

11. Wipe the outside of the leg bag and tubing clean with a baby wipe or a moist, soapy washcloth. Dry it with a clean cloth and put it in the pink plastic basin (Figure Q).



Figure Q

The **steps for changing from an overnight bag to a leg bag** are the same except for Step 10. Because the overnight bag comes with a cover for the connector, after cleaning the connector with an alcohol swab, you can put the cover back on instead of using the alcohol wipe pouch (Figure R).

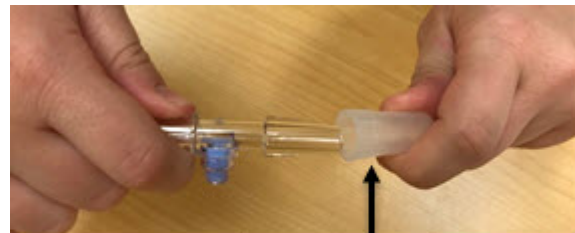


Figure R

Connector
cover

How do I clean my catheter?

It is very important to keep your catheter clean to lower the risk of infection. Clean the skin around the catheter and the catheter tubing two times each day.

Use the following supplies each time:

1. 2 clean, soft washcloths
2. Soap that will not irritate your skin. An unscented soap is best.

Cleaning steps:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Wet one of the cloths with soap and water, then gently clean the skin around the place where the catheter leaves your body. Rinse the washcloth with water until the soap is gone and then clean the soap off your skin with the wet washcloth. If you are in the shower, you can let the shower water flow over your skin to rinse off the soap.
3. Wet the second cloth with soap and water, then clean the catheter tubing, starting near where it leaves the body, and continuing down to where it attaches to the urine collection bag. Handle the tube gently, **do not pull or tug** the tubing. Rinse with a wet cloth or shower water.

How do I take care of the bag when I shower?

It is best to shower while you are still using the overnight bag. Drain the bag before you get into the shower. Put the bag on the floor of the shower stall or tub near where you are standing. Be careful not to twist or pull on the tubing or bag while you are showering. Pick up the bag before you step out of the shower. Put it on a clean towel on the floor. Dry yourself, the tubing, and the bag.

What color should my urine be?

During the first few days after surgery, your urine may be orange colored. This is caused by medicine that you may have received during your surgery. After

one or two days, your urine should be light yellow. If it is very dark yellow, drink more water. If your urine looks like water, drink less.

How much should I drink?

Do not drink more than 60 ounces of fluids per day. This includes all kinds of fluids such as coffee, tea, water, juice, and pop.

When should I call for help?

Call a nurse at the clinic where you went to see your doctor if:

- Urine is bloody
- Urine has a foul (bad) odor
- Urine is cloudy
- Temperature is over 100.4 ° F (38° C)
- Your catheter falls out
- Your catheter is not draining.

Clinic Phone Numbers

- Between 8am and 5pm on Monday - Friday, call the nurse at the clinic where you went to see your doctor. Clinic phone numbers are:
 - Ann Arbor Von Voigtlander Clinic: (734) 763-6295
 - Chelsea Health Center: 734-475-4003
 - Midland Clinic: (989) 837-9047
 - Northville Health Center: (248) 305-4400
 - West Ann Arbor Health Center: (734) 998-7380
- At night or on the weekend call (734) 936-6267 and ask for the gynecology resident on call. There is always someone on call to help you.

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