



Your community Health Catheter Passport

Looking after your catheter

Other formats

If you would like a large print version of this booklet, please ask your community nurse.

If you need this information in another format such as audio tape or computer disc, Braille, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

Patient details

Patient	Name	
	Address	
	Postcode	
Community nurses		In hours Monday to Friday Telephone:
		Out of hours Evenings, weekends and bank holidays Telephone:
GP	Name	
	Address	
	Tel No	
Clinic / hospital	Name	
	Address	
	Tel No	

Your community health catheter passport

We provide NHS adult community health services to people in Devon. This passport has been designed to support you in looking after your urinary catheter. If you have an appointment at your GP surgery or hospital, you should take this booklet with you. The second half of this booklet will be completed by nursing staff to ensure your continuity of care.

Our aim is to put your safety and care at the heart of what we do and to deliver high-quality healthcare services which meet your individual needs. If you have any questions or concerns about your care, please contact your nurse. Alternatively, you can contact our Patient and Advice Liaison Service (PALS) on 01271 314090.

What is a urinary catheter?

A catheter is a flexible hollow tube used to drain urine from the bladder. The catheter is inserted into the urethra (the opening of which is situated at the tip of the penis or just above the vagina) or through a hole made in the abdomen (suprapubic catheter). The catheter is then guided into the bladder, allowing urine to flow through it and into a drainage bag which will be attached to your leg. Some people may have a valve at the end of the catheter instead of a drainage bag.

What should I do if I have pain and discomfort?

Lower abdominal or tummy pain can be experienced when a catheter is first inserted. If this continues, contact your nurse for advice.

When will my catheter need changing?

Your nurse will advise you on how often your catheter needs changing and also how to obtain further supplies of catheter equipment. It is important to always keep spare equipment in your home.

How do I look after my catheter on a daily basis?

- Empty the leg bag when it is two thirds full of urine.
- If you have a valve attached to your catheter instead of a leg bag, you should open the valve and empty your bladder:
 - when you feel that it is full
 - before going to bed
 - first thing in the morning
 - during the night if necessary
 - at least every 3–4 hours during the day
 - before opening your bowels
- Replace the leg bag or valve once a week.
- To help prevent infection, only disconnect the leg bag or valve weekly when it needs to be replaced with a new one.
- Attach a night bag to the leg bag or valve every night, to prevent having to empty the bag overnight. Remember to open the valve from your leg bag or catheter valve, which is connected to the night bag.
- Close the leg bag or catheter valve and remove the night bag every morning and dispose of it (see page 8).

- Ensure that the night drainage bag is attached to a suitable stand (please check with your nurse if you don't have one).
- If you have a suprapubic catheter and there is a small leakage around the insertion site, you will have a dressing for the first few days until the leakage has stopped. The area can be washed as described below when the dressing has been removed.

How can I reduce the risk of getting an infection?

- Wash your hands before and after handling your catheter.
- Wash the skin in the area where the catheter enters the body with mild soap and water at least once a day.
- Men should carefully wash under the foreskin (unless you have been circumcised). Dry the area thoroughly and ensure the foreskin is replaced over the end of the penis.
- Women should always wash the genital area from front to back to prevent contamination from the back passage. Dry the area thoroughly.
- Avoid the use of talc, antiseptic, bubble bath or bath salts and creams. These can cause irritation.
- Do not remove your leg bag when you have a bath or shower.

What should my urine look like?

- Urine should be a light yellow colour. If it is orange/dark brown, you may not be drinking enough fluid.
 - You should drink approximately 1.5 to 2 litres (2.5 to 3.5 pints) which is 8 cups or 5 mugs of fluid in 24 hours.

- Avoid caffeine as this may irritate your bladder. There is caffeine in tea, coffee, cola and drinking chocolate. Try decaffeinated drinks.
- Some medication and foods may cause discolouration of urine. Your nurse will be happy to discuss this with you.
- If your urine is cloudy or smells offensive and doesn't improve after drinking more fluids, contact your nurse.
- If your urine is bloodstained or has specks of blood in it, contact your nurse.
- If you are passing bright red blood you should contact your doctor.
- Some patients with urinary catheters have frequent blockages and therefore may find benefit from consuming citric based drinks such as lemon and orange. For further information discuss with your nurse.

What should I do if my catheter is not draining or is leaking?

- Check the drainage bag is below the level of the bladder, particularly when sitting in a low chair.
- Make sure that the tubing is not twisted or restricted by tight clothing.
- Make sure that the tubing is not pulled tight or stretched as this may restrict urine flow.
- Check that the drainage bag is connected correctly. Make sure that the straps, which secure the leg bag to your leg, are positioned behind the leg bag tube.
- Urine will not drain if the bag is full. Empty the bag when it is two thirds full.

- Constipation can prevent your catheter from draining. Ask your nurse about eating a healthy diet to avoid constipation.
- Change your position and walk around if possible.
- Make sure that you are drinking enough fluid – 1.5 to 2 litres (2.5 to 3.5 pints) which is 8 cups or 5 mugs in 24 hours.
- If you experience any urine leakage, please contact your nurse.
- Check that your catheter is draining well at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Make sure the valve or leg bag tap is open when connected to the night bag.

How do I dispose of used catheter bags?

- Empty the contents into the toilet.
- Double wrap the bag (either in newspaper or a plastic bag).
- Place into your household waste bin or yellow clinical waste bag.

What about sex?

Sexual intercourse is possible even if you have a urinary catheter, please discuss with your nurse who will advise on the best approach for you.

Benefits

A urinary catheter can assist following surgery or support the rehabilitation process to enhance recovery. It may also be used to help improve the skin condition by diverting urine away from any broken skin. If you have a catheter in place you should understand the reason for it and ask that it will be reviewed at every catheter change.

Risks

A urinary catheter can increase your risk of developing a urinary tract infection, so good hand washing is necessary by you and anyone else touching your catheter. Complications can include bladder spasms, leakage, blockage, the formation of stones in the bladder and discomfort.

When should I ask for help?

Your catheter should remain comfortable and pain free. However, you should contact your nurse if:

- You experience acute lower abdominal or tummy pain.
- Urine is not draining and you have followed the simple self-help measures within this information booklet.
- The catheter falls out and you are unable to pass urine.
- The catheter falls out and you can pass urine.
- There is blood in your urine.
- Urine is cloudy, smelly or you have a burning sensation, which does not improve after drinking extra fluids.
- Urine is leaking around the catheter, enough to make your clothing wet.

Catheterisation records

All details of urinary catheterisation should be recorded in the sections below as well as the appropriate nursing/medical records.

Completion of the booklet will enhance continuity of care for the patient between both community and hospital settings.

Catheterisation details

Reason for catheterisation	
Date of first catheterisation	
Catheter type and size	

Drainage system used and ordering codes	
Leg bags	
Night bags	
Catheter valves	

Any problems experienced during catheterisation

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If during insertion or removal of the catheter there is a possibility of trauma to the urethra or any trauma or bleeding occurs, review should be sought urgently.

Details of MRSA positive results in urine

(other sites, e.g. nose, perineum, wounds, are not applicable)

Date of positive result for MRSA in the urine				
If confirmed CAUTI, please detail specific symptoms and previous effective antibiotics used				

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Expiry date	
Reason for catheter change	
Problems	
Date of next planned change	
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Useful contact details

What to expect from the care you receive to help prevent catheter acquired urinary tract infection (CAUTI)

- The continuing need for your catheter should be assessed at every visit or nurses' shift.
- You or anyone else should wash your hands before and after handling your catheter.
- An aseptic procedure should be used for each new catheter you have inserted.
- You should be encouraged (or receive help) to clean the catheter where it enters your body and also the perineum (the small strip of skin before the anus) at least once a day and after passing stool.
- The catheter and the drainage system should not be broken unless necessary.
- Your catheter should be secured to the thigh to prevent traction inside your bladder.
- For men, they must NEVER have a female length catheter inserted.
- Your drainage bag must be below the level of the bladder (during transport and activity).

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PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, call 01271 314090 or e-mail: ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple. Alternatively, it may be possible for us to arrange an appointment in your area.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of the ward staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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