



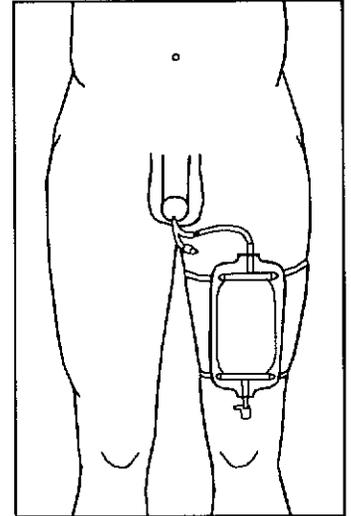
HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR FOLEY CATHETER

What is a Foley catheter?

A Foley catheter drains urine from your bladder, so you will not need to use a bedpan or toilet. A tiny balloon on one end of the catheter (a plastic tube) holds it inside your bladder.

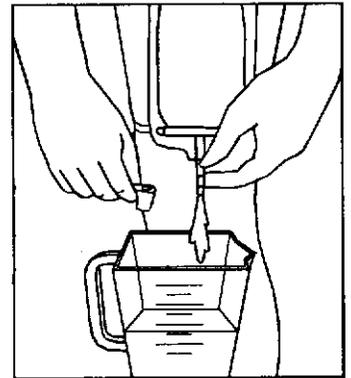
Your Foley catheter is connected to tubing that leads to a drainage bag. Urine from the catheter drains through the tubing into the drainage bag. During the day, you will use a leg bag that straps around your thigh (see diagram).

At night, you will connect the Foley catheter to a larger, night drainage bag like the one you used in the hospital. Because the leg bag is smaller than the night drainage bag, it allows you to move around more easily. However, you must empty the leg bag every 3 to 4 hours.



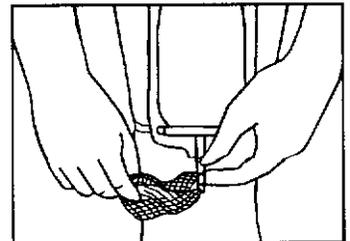
How to drain the leg bag

First, wash your hands. If someone is helping you drain your bag, make sure he or she washes also. Then release the clamp to drain all the urine. If the drain tube has a plug in the end of the tube, that will need to be removed. If your doctor has asked you to measure and record your urine output, drain the urine into a measuring cup so you can record the amount (see diagram). If you do not need to measure your urine output, drain the urine into the toilet.



Do not touch the drain port with your fingers or with the container or toilet seat.

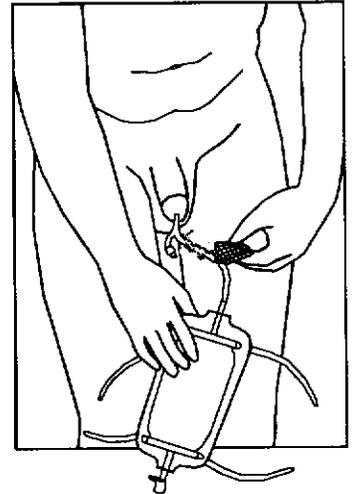
After the urine has drained completely, wipe the drain port and the plug (if there is one) with an alcohol swab.



How to disconnect the leg bag

Before you go to bed, you will need to change the leg bag you used during the day. Replace it with a larger, night drainage bag. The night drainage bag holds more urine. You will not have to worry about emptying it during the night.

Before you can connect the night drainage bag, you must first empty the leg bag you used during the day. Follow the instructions for emptying your leg bag (see above). When the leg bag is empty, clamp the catheter closed by pinching or squeezing the tubing. Swab the connection between the catheter and drainage tubing of the empty leg bag with alcohol. Disconnect the catheter from the leg bag tubing. Connect the night drainage tubing and bag to the catheter. Then, release the pinch on the catheter.



How to clean the leg bag

After you disconnect the leg bag and connect the catheter to the night bag, wash the leg bag in soap and warm water. Rinse the bag with warm water. Next, you will need to disinfect the leg bag with a mixture of white (distilled) vinegar and water. Do not use yellow (cider) vinegar. Mix 1 ¼ cups of white vinegar with 2 quarts of water. Rinse the bag well with this solution to help reduce urine odor. (Do not rinse the bag with water after using the vinegar solution.) Then, wash your hands.

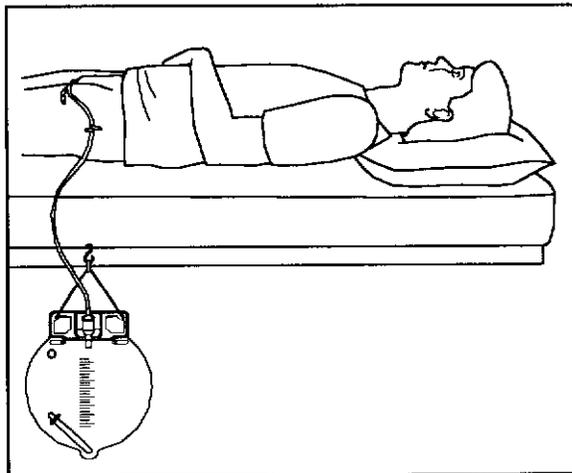
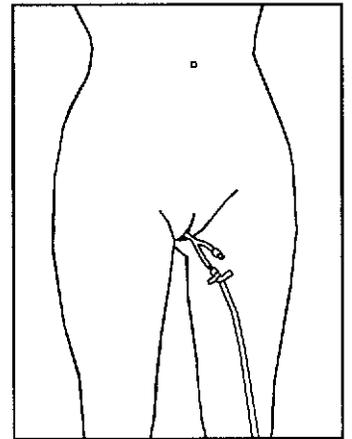
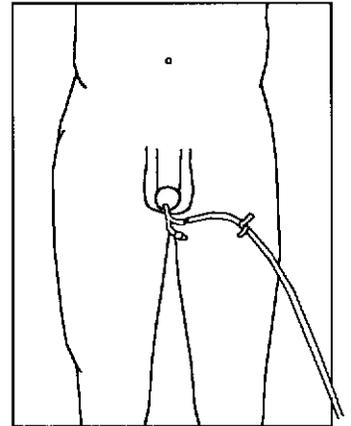
Getting ready for bed

When your night drainage bag is connected and you are ready to go to bed, you will need to decide from which side of the bed you want the drainage bag to hang. Tape the drainage tubing to the thigh of the leg that will be next to the edge of the bed. Use hypoallergenic (HI-po-al-er-JEN-ik) tape, which is available at most drug stores and supermarkets. (Johnson & Johnson and Curity both make hypoallergenic tape.) Leave some slack in the line so you will not pull on the catheter when you move while sleeping.

If you are a man, tape the drainage tubing to the inner thigh, opposite the tip of your penis (see diagram).

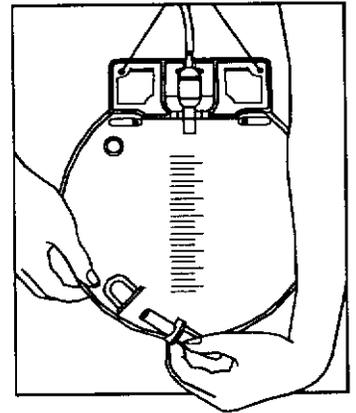
If you are a woman, tape the drainage tubing to the inner thigh below the vaginal area (see diagram).

When you get into bed, arrange the drainage tubing so it does not kink or loop. Then hang the drainage bag by its hook from the side of the bed frame. Be sure to keep the drainage bag **below** the level of your bladder **at all times**, whether you are lying, sitting, or standing. Do not hang the bag from the headboard or footboard of the bed or from a chair beside the bed.



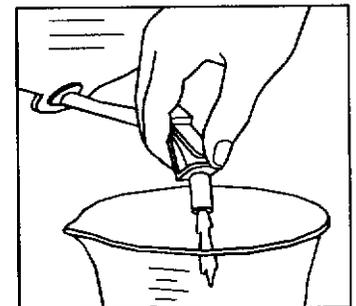
How to empty the night drainage bag

In the morning, you will need to empty the night drainage bag before reconnecting the leg bag. To do this, first wash your hands. Then unclamp the drainage tube and remove it from its sleeve (see top diagram). Do not touch the tip of the drain port. If you do not need to measure your urine output, drain the urine into the toilet. If your doctor has asked you to measure and record your urine output, drain the urine into a measuring cup (see middle diagram). **Do not let the drain port touch the toilet or measuring cup.** When the bag is empty, swab the end of the drain port with alcohol swab (see bottom diagram). Reclamp the tube and insert it back into the sleeve of the drainage bag.

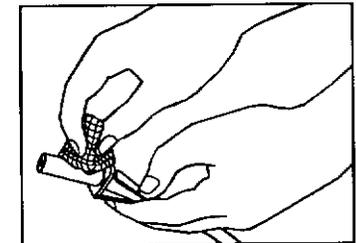


How to reconnect the leg bag

After you empty the night drainage bag, reconnect the leg bag. To do this, clamp the catheter closed by pinching or squeezing the tubing. Swab the connection between the catheter and the night bag drainage tubing with alcohol. Disconnect the night bag and reconnect the leg bag. Release the pinch on the catheter.



After the leg bag is connected, wash the night bag with soap and warm water. Then rinse it with water. Disinfect the bag with the white vinegar and water solution (see “How to clean the leg bag”). (Do not rinse the bag with water after you use the vinegar solution.)



Special note: You may use both types of drainage bags for up to one month. After one month, you will need new bags. You can buy new bags at most home health care supply stores.

How to care for your Foley catheter

Proper care of your Foley catheter is important during your recovery. Follow these guidelines to help your catheter work right. You will have fewer problems with your catheter.

- ❖ **Do not try to remove the catheter yourself.**
- ❖ Wash the area around the catheter with soap and warm water twice each day. This will help reduce irritation and the chance of infection. Wash your rectal area at least twice a day and after each bowel movement. If you are a woman, wash your vaginal area as well.
- ❖ Never pull on your catheter for any reason.
- ❖ Drink between 6 and 8, 8-ounce glasses of fluid each day. (Unless directed otherwise by your healthcare provider.)
- ❖ Call your healthcare provider **at once** if you have any problems with your catheter. Possible problems are urine leaking from the catheter, pain and a bloated feeling in your abdomen,

change in color, smell or amount of urine, or an urge to urinate.

- ❖ Only family members who have been taught how to help you with your catheter care should handle the drainage bag and equipment.
- ❖ Be sure the drainage bag **always** is below the level of your bladder.
- ❖ Return to your healthcare provider for follow-up as appropriate.
- ❖ Call your doctor's office if you cannot keep follow-up appointment.

This information is not intended to be used as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You should not rely entirely on this information for your health care needs. Ask your own doctor or health care provider any specific medical questions that you have.

“Adapted with permission from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center’s *How to Care for Your Foley Catheter*, Copyright 2001.”

Edited by C. Jeffres: Bassett Healthcare 2003.

PATIENT EDUCATION

F:\NURADMIN\PATIENT EDUCATION\UROLOGY & VDC\629.doc