



Berkshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

My Catheter Passport

Looking After My Urinary Catheter

This Is A Shared Record Between The Patient
And The Healthcare Professional



Committed To Excellence

Working Together

Facing The Future

Your details

Name
Address
Postcode

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your catheter, please contact the appropriate healthcare professional.

Who should I contact?



Call your Community Nurse 0300 365 1234



If you need to see someone out of hours call: 111

Your important contact numbers

Berkshire Continence Prescription Service (for ordering supplies)	0118 949 5271 continence@berkshire.nhs.uk
GP	
Hospital Team	
Urology Royal Berkshire Hospital	
Urology Frimley Park Hospital	
Urology Wexham Park Hospital	

FOR THE PATIENT

Introduction

This passport will help you to understand what a catheter is, why you may need one inserted, and how you should look after it. It also has space for healthcare professionals to record important information about your catheter, and for you both to record decisions that you've made together about your care.

Make sure you keep this record of your catheter and have it with you whenever you have your catheter changed, so your lead healthcare professional (this could be your GP/practice nurse/community nurse) can update your catheter details.

Why do I need a catheter?

There are many reasons why people need a catheter: your bladder may not be able to contract on its own to empty itself, or you may need it for other health-related problems. You may need a catheter for a short period, such as before or after surgery, or you may need it permanently. The reason you require a catheter is:

Long-term **Short-term**

Your healthcare professional will explain to you in detail why you need to have a catheter, how long you may need it for, and what type is best for you. They will also ask you to give your verbal consent to have a catheter. Please make sure you ask any questions you have at this time.

If your catheter is short-term, an appointment for a trial without catheter (TWOC) should have been made for you in:

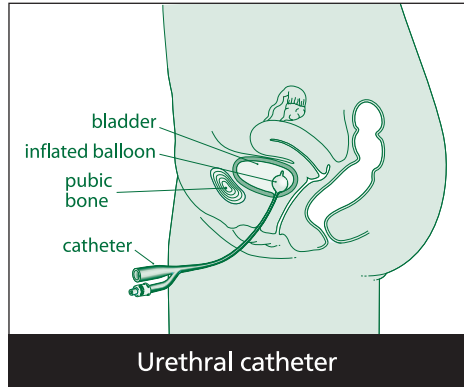
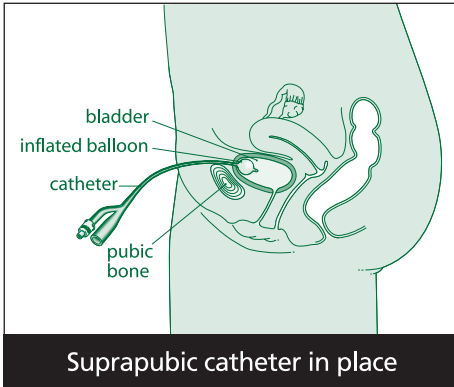
weeks at

(For the healthcare professional: if you do not know date and time please write Outpatient Dept details for patient to follow up)

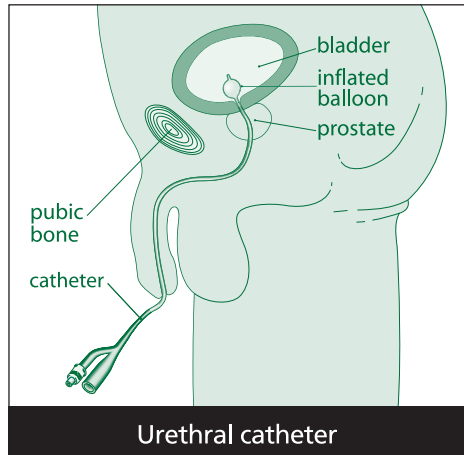
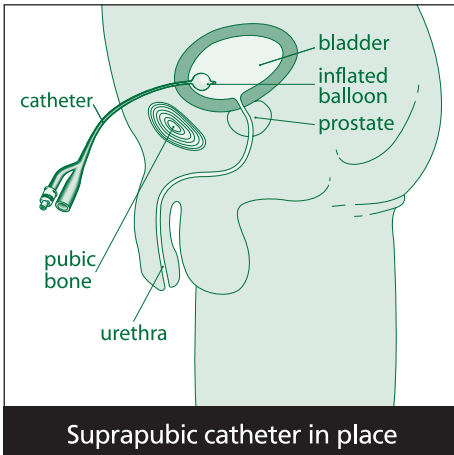
What is a urinary catheter?

A catheter is a hollow, flexible tube that drains urine from your bladder. A **urethral catheter** drains through your urethra (the tube through which urine passes). A **suprapubic catheter** drains through a channel in your abdomen wall. See the diagrams below.

Female



Male



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Having a catheter inserted

The way that your catheter is inserted will depend on the reason and length of time that you need it. Once it is in place, a balloon is inflated inside your bladder to prevent the catheter from falling out. Your catheter will be attached either to a leg bag or a catheter valve.

A **leg bag** is a simple drainage bag to collect your urine. This is strapped to your leg. If you are bed bound, it may be a **belly bag** or a **two litre bag** rather than a leg bag. It needs to be **emptied when the bag is three-quarters full**.

With a **catheter valve**, your urine collects in your bladder, which can be **emptied a minimum of 3 times a day at regular intervals** by releasing the valve.

Both options will be explained to you, as well as how to operate them. The bag or valve needs changing as **recommended by the manufacturer's instructions (this is usually once per week)**. It is important that you do not change them more often, as this raises the risk of infection. Write the date on the bag when you change it.

Securing your catheter

Occasionally, straps to secure the leg bag to your leg may not be appropriate. Your lead healthcare professional will discuss alternatives with you and advise you of the most appropriate device.

At night

When going to bed, you should attach the leg bag or valve to a larger bag, which will drain freely overnight to collect the urine. If you are prone to swollen legs or have poor circulation, loosen the velcro straps on the leg bag so that they do not constrict the blood flow to your leg. In shared living circumstances (such as hostels, shared housing, care homes etc) the risk of infection increases, so the bag should be single use, and disposed of after each night.

If your bag is re-usable: In the morning, disconnect the night bag, empty it, wash through with soapy water and store it in a clean place until you reconnect it. This bag should also be changed according to the manufacturer's instructions.

You will be given supplies when you leave the hospital,
and informed of how to get further products

Will I have any pain?

The catheter may feel uncomfortable at first. You could experience spasms (sudden contractions of your muscles) which can be painful, make you feel like you need to pass urine, and cause some urine to leak around the catheter. If you have spasms:

- try repositioning the catheter so that it is not pulling on your bladder
- try to relax and do not strain or try to push the catheter out
- drink as advised on page 8 and avoid bladder irritants: caffeine (including coffee, tea, green tea), citrus fruits and juice, artificial sweetener and fizzy drinks.

If this feeling lasts, take painkillers to ease the pain. If the pain persists, contact your healthcare professional for further advice.

You may find it uncomfortable when the catheter is removed, but it should not be painful.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR CATHETER

Having a catheter should **not** prevent you from doing everything you were doing previously

Hygiene

Before and after touching your catheter you must always wash your hands thoroughly.

You can bathe or shower as normal with a catheter. **If you have a leg bag, do not disconnect it**, as this could introduce an infection. If you are not able to have a bath or shower, wash the area where the catheter enters your body twice a day. Wash the area using downward strokes from where it enters the body. Again, this is to help prevent infection. **Do not** apply talcum powder or cream to the area as this may increase the risk of infection.

Your diet and fluids

It is important to eat a balanced diet of fruit, vegetables and fibre to avoid constipation (difficulty or pain emptying your bowels). If your bowel is full, which happens when you are constipated, it can press on your bladder, reduce urine drainage and may block the catheter.

Drinking is very important when you have a catheter. **Try to drink at least one-and-a-half to two litres per day (six to eight large glasses of fluid)**, unless you have been otherwise advised by your healthcare professional. This will help prevent infections and flush out any debris in your bladder.

Drinking alcohol will not affect your catheter. However, if you are taking certain medicines or recovering from surgery, your doctor may advise against drinking alcohol. This depends on your individual circumstances. Please ask your healthcare professional if you are uncertain.

Can I work and exercise as normal?

You can return to work, exercise or go on holiday as soon as you feel able to and your doctor has said you are fit enough to do so.

What about sex?

If you are sexually active, you can be assessed and taught how to intermittently self-catheterise if appropriate, or you might like to consider having a supra-pubic catheter fitted, if you would like to be considered for either of these options please speak to your health care professional.

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.

Changing your catheter

Catheters can stay in place for two to 12 weeks before they need to be changed. Your healthcare professional will change your catheter as necessary, unless you are due to have it permanently removed.

If you have a suprapubic catheter, you may need to come back to hospital the first time it is changed. After this, your healthcare professional can change it.

You will be referred to the appropriate healthcare professional when you leave. If you have a new or long-term catheter, prophylactic antibiotics (taken as a precaution against infection) are not required unless you develop symptoms that may require antibiotics. Some patients may require antibiotics when their catheter is being changed, you will be advised of this by your healthcare professional.

Are there any alternatives to a catheter?

There are many reasons why a catheter may need to be inserted. The team caring for you will explain if there are any alternatives for you.

If you are male and have been catheterised for continence issues an external sheath catheter (also known as a condom catheter) can be used. This is fitted over the penis and connected to a drainage bag.

Intermittent self-catheterisation

You may be able to perform intermittent self-catheterisation. This involves passing a catheter into your bladder to drain your urine, then removing the catheter and discarding it. We will give special training on how to do this, so ask the medical team if you think this is something you would like to do instead.

Are there any risks with having a catheter?

You may have a slightly increased risk of developing a urinary tract infection (UTI). Your doctor/nurse will discuss any risks with you before asking for your consent to insert the catheter. Following the guidance on your diet and fluids (on page 8) will help to reduce the risk of developing a UTI.

What is a urinary tract infection?

A catheter can sometimes allow bacteria (germs) to enter the body. This can cause an infection in the urethra or bladder. This type of infection is known as a urinary tract infection (UTI). Some of the common symptoms of a UTI include:

- passing bad-smelling cloudy urine
- high temperature (fever)
- vomiting
- stomach pain.

Contact your GP/community nurse as soon as possible if you think you have a UTI.

Self-help – what if i have problems?

Blood in your urine

When the catheter is first inserted or changed, your urine may have blood in it. Drink extra fluids to flush the blood out. If this continues, you should contact your lead healthcare professional.

If the catheter is accidentally pulled on or pulled out it may cause bleeding. To prevent this, please make sure that it is secured properly. If this does happen, contact your healthcare professional.

Leaking catheters

Sometimes the catheter can leak around the entry site. If this happens:

- make sure the tubing is not blocked or kinked (bent)
- move the drainage bag below the level of your bladder
- make sure you are not constipated

Do not apply tape to keep the bag attached to the catheter. If you are experiencing leakage, you may need to change the bag you are using to a different type with a different connection. Your healthcare professional can advise you on this.

Blocked catheters

If your catheter becomes blocked you should:

- empty the drainage bag, so you can see if it begins to drain
- lift the drainage bag above the level of the bladder then lower it again, which can release any suction of the bladder wall

If the above does not resolve the issue, please contact your lead healthcare professional (see contact details on page 2).

Soreness

If you experience soreness, ensure your catheter retention strap is correctly fitted, as well as your leg straps if wearing a leg bag.

Cloudy, bad-smelling, thick urine

Your urine should be light yellow in colour (although some medicines may discolour urine) and should flow freely. If your urine becomes cloudy, smelly or thick, check that you are drinking enough and increase your fluid intake accordingly.

Faecal incontinence

If you have difficulty controlling your bowels, you may be at a higher risk of contracting a UTI. If you are worried about this, please speak to your healthcare professional to find out how you can avoid it.

When Should I Ask For Help?

You should know what is normal for you. If you experience symptoms that are unusual for you and have followed the steps in the self-help guide, please contact your healthcare professional.

Common reasons to seek help:

- no urine drains from your bladder for four hours (and you are drinking as normal)
- you are experiencing pain
- urine is leaking around the catheter

Your healthcare professional or out-of-hours service will be able to offer advice. Please contact your hospital team or community nurse as per contacts on page 2. All other catheter issues can wait until your healthcare professional is available.

If you have a suprapubic catheter and it falls out, contact your healthcare professional immediately. Urethral catheters need to be replaced less urgently. If you are experiencing no urine drainage and some abdominal discomfort, seek help immediately.

If you are concerned about anything, please ask a healthcare professional (see contact details on page 2).

Catheterisation records

This section is for your
Healthcare professional to fill in

Catheterisation Records

All healthcare professionals should record details of urinary catheterisation in the sections below, as well as the appropriate nursing/medical records. Please use pages 15-18 to record any catheter changes. Pages 19-22 should be used by both the patient and healthcare professional to document any problems and subsequent interventions.

Catheterisation Details

Reason for catheterisation (is it safe for a catheter change in patients home?)	
Type of leg bag or catheter valve	
Type of night bag	
Drainage system used and ordering codes	
Type of catheter	
Date of first catheterisation	
Catheter type and size	
Any problems experienced during catheterisation?	
Residual volume If applicable / retention	

Date of next catheter change

Please document any important infections, or colonisation with multi-drug resistant organisms, information below and whether prophylactic antibiotics are given.

Date of any microbiology specimens positive for multi-drug resistant organisms
(eg. MRSA, VRE, ESBL, AmpC, CPE)

Known allergies

For the healthcare professional

Record of catheter changes

Date	
Type of catheter	ADD STICKER
Size	
Batch Number	
Expiry date	
Gel used	
Reason for change	
Any problems	
Date & time of next planned change	

Date	
Type of catheter	ADD STICKER
Size	
Batch Number	
Expiry date	
Gel used	
Reason for change	
Any problems	
Date & time of next planned change	

Date	
Type of catheter	ADD STICKER
Size	
Batch Number	
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Gel used	
Reason for change	
Any problems	
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Batch Number	
Expiry date	
Gel used	
Reason for change	
Any problems	
Date & time of next planned change	

Date	
Type of catheter	ADD STICKER
Size	
Batch Number	
Expiry date	
Gel used	
Reason for change	
Any problems	
Date & time of next planned change	

For the patient and the healthcare professional

Record of catheter changes

The section below is a space for you to record any problems you have with your catheter and the actions that you agree with your healthcare professional.

Record any problems you have experienced or any issues you would like to discuss. When you visit your healthcare professional, discuss the problem and agree together how this will be resolved. The actions should be recorded as well.

Date	
What problem would you like to discuss with your healthcare professional?	
Joint agreed action	
Name (printed)	

Date	
What problem would you like to discuss with your healthcare professional?	
Joint agreed action	
Name (printed)	

Date	
What problem would you like to discuss with your healthcare professional?	
Joint agreed action	
Name (printed)	

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