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The Royal Liverpool  
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## Patient information

# Caring For Your Catheter in Hospital

### Urology Speciality

You have had a catheter put into your bladder to drain your urine. This leaflet explains how to care for your catheter while you are in hospital.

#### General information about catheters

Your catheter is a tube that drains urine from your bladder. It is held in place by a balloon of water, which stops it falling out.

A catheter is inserted into the bladder through the urethra. This is a small opening above the vagina in women. In men, the urethra runs through the length of the penis.

The catheter usually drains into a bag, which you can either carry or attach to your leg using Velcro straps. There is a tap at the bottom of the bag from which the bag can be emptied. You may also have a catheter valve instead of a bag, which you will need to empty at least four to six hourly.

In hospital, nursing staff will carry out most of your catheter care, but there are things you can do to help.

#### Safety

- Please keep the catheter and the bag below your waist so it is able to drain properly.
- You must have a special strap on your thigh to prevent the catheter pulling. It is called a G strap and the nursing staff will give you a supply of these.
- Do not take the bag off unless nursing staff are present.
- Do not tug or pull at the tube or bag.
- Ensure the tube is not twisted or kinked, especially at night.
- Nursing staff will help you safely in and out of bed if necessary.
- If you leak urine from around the catheter please inform the nursing staff.

#### Hygiene

- You should wash around the area where the catheter enters your body once or twice a day. **Do not** use Dettol or Savlon, just warm water will do.
- Nursing staff will change your bag weekly (catheter tubes can be left in for up to three months).

- You can shower and bathe with a catheter and bag because they are waterproof (make sure you keep the catheter bag below your waist, **but do not** place on the floor). The straps can be replaced by nursing staff.
- If you touch the tap of your bag, please wash your hands before and after.

### **Eating and Drinking**

- You can eat as normal, you should drink plenty of fluids these include tea, juices and water. We recommend that you drink a cup or glassful every hour throughout the day.
- Do not strain when having your bowels opened.
- The urine in your bag should be straw coloured. If it becomes cloudy, dark, bloodstained or smells strange, please inform the nursing staff.

### **Further information**

**If you have any questions or are unsure about your catheter and bag, please do not hesitate to ask the nursing staff.**

**Department of Health: [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)**

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**Review date: April 2021**

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