

Catheter Care - information for going home

The Royal Women's Hospital Fact Sheet / www.thewomens.org.au



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If you are to go home with a catheter, there are a few important things that you need to know. Most of the information in this fact sheet is to help you to avoid getting an infection.

Before you go home

Before you go home, a nurse will change your large catheter bag to a smaller leg bag. The nurse will teach you how to empty and attach an overnight bag to the leg bag.

The leg bag stays attached to the catheter at all times and the overnight bag is connected for night time use so that you won't need to empty the bag once you have gone to bed.

At home

- Wash your hands **before and after** doing anything with the catheter bag.
- Empty the catheter bag when necessary.
- Make sure the tubing of the catheter and catheter bag is never kinked or twisted.
- Securely tape the catheter to your leg so that it is not pulling.
- Change the tape from leg to leg each day.
- Make sure the leg bag is secured with the leg bag straps provided.
- Make sure the catheter bag is always below the level of your bladder (i.e. not above your thigh).
- Keep your genital area very clean:
 - wash genital area twice a day
 - change pads regularly if you are using them
 - do not use talcum powder
 - wear cotton underpants if you can.
- Continue to drink at least two litres of fluid over 24 hours to prevent urine infection. Cranberry juice or cranberry tablets, which you can buy from health food shops and supermarkets, can help to prevent urinary infections.
- Be aware of the signs of infection, which include;
 - sudden hot flushes/high temperatures/sweating etc
 - sudden onset of pain
 - smelly urine.

If you think you have an infection please see your own doctor (GP).

Royal Women's Hospital patients can also contact 5 North on (03) 8345 3530 or 5 South on (03) 8345 2500 or visit Women's Emergency Care at the Royal Women's Hospital.

The Women's is a smoke free hospital. For more information and support visit www.quit.org.au

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