

REDUCING CATHETER ASSOCIATED URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS IN HOSPITAL

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

What is a urinary catheter?

A urinary catheter is a drainage tube that is inserted into the bladder to drain urine. A small balloon at the tip of the catheter holds the catheter inside the bladder so it will not fall out.

How does a catheter work?

The catheter will be connected to a catheter bag. The catheter and bag should be connected at all times, unless one of them is being changed. This will help prevent germs entering the catheter and causing an infection.

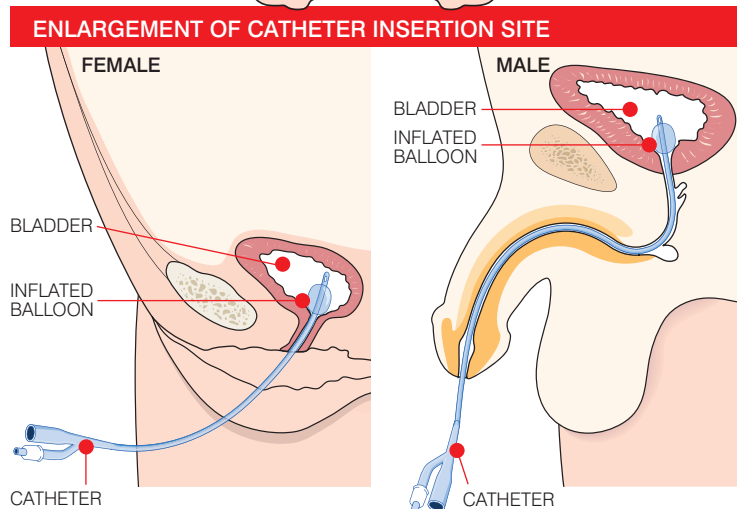
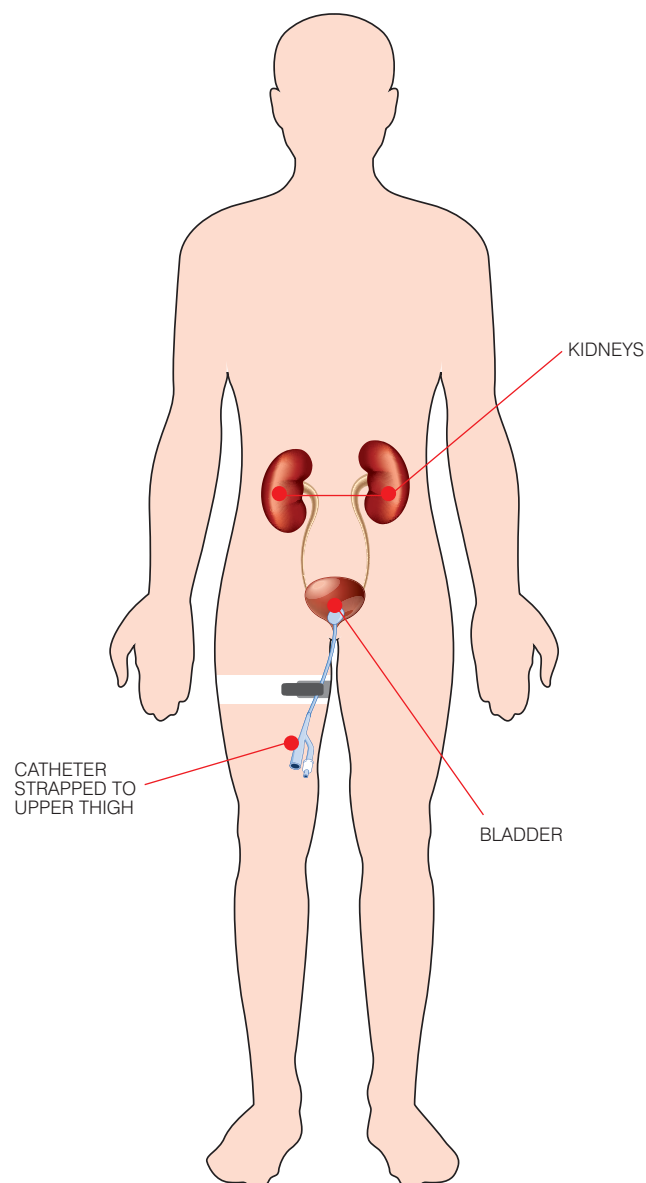
The bag should be emptied when it is $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Your nurse will empty it for you if you have never done this before.

Will I get an infection if I have a urinary catheter?

It is important to know that having a catheter does not mean you will get an infection. Having a catheter in place will put you at a higher risk of getting a urinary tract infection, but these infections can be prevented through good personal hygiene and catheter care.

At any time during your hospital stay, you can talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about your catheter. Questions you might like to ask may include:

- Why do I need a catheter?
- How is it going to feel when it is in place?
- Will I still feel like I need to go to the toilet?
- How long will I need the catheter for?
- What should I do if my catheter or catheter bag gets dirty?



What can I do to help prevent a urinary tract infection while I am in hospital?



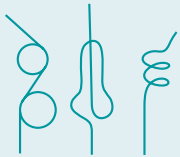
Wash your hands before and after touching the catheter or bag.



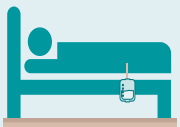
Keep the catheter secured to your body.



Make sure the bag is always connected to the catheter.



Check for kinks or loops.



Keep your bag below the level of your hip, and off the floor.



Shower daily and wash around where the catheter has been inserted.

What should I look out for?

Tell your doctor or nurse immediately if you feel or notice any of these things:

Constipation

Urine level has not changed in 4 hours

Blood in your urine

Cloudy or smelly urine

Stomach or lower back pain

Chills or fever

Any pain or discomfort around your catheter

Feeling confused or not like your usual self

If your catheter moves out of place or falls out

Disclaimer

This brochure is provided for information only. It is not intended to substitute for medical advice and should not be used to determine actual treatment choices or decisions. This brochure has been adapted and modified from material produced by Hunter New England LHD and Nepean Blue Mountains LHD.

About this Project

This project is being undertaken by the CEC's Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) program. The HAI program aims to assist local health districts and speciality health networks to improve systems to manage and monitor the prevention and control of HAIs.

A copy of this brochure can be downloaded from the Clinical Excellence Commission's website: www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/programs/hai

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