

ADVICE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

URETHRAL CATHETER CARE AT HOME

This information is intended to help you to care for your child when he/she is discharged home with a urethral catheter in.

A urethral catheter is used to drain urine from the bladder. The urethra is the tube which runs from the bladder to the outside which the urine flows down when 'weeing'

The catheter is inserted into the bladder through the urethra, and is held in place by a small balloon inside the bladder. It is often used to aid bladder drainage after operations to the urinary system as it allows them to rest whilst they are healing.

In most cases, the urethral catheter is only needed on a temporary basis until the urinary system has recovered from the operation. Sometimes, the catheter can cause bladder cramps or spasms, but you may be given medication to deal with this before you go home if necessary.

Your child may also be discharged home with antibiotics to prevent infection and pain relief for any discomfort.

The two most important aspects of care are;

- Maintain good urine drainage
- Prevent infection

The drainage system consists of the catheter (thin, plastic tube) and a collecting bag. You will also need some tape and new collection bags. You will be given a supply of everything you need before you go home.

INSTRUCTIONS

- The catheter will remain in place until your child comes back to the ward to have it removed. In some cases this can be done at home.
- Keep the catheter taped securely to your child's abdomen (tummy) / leg / thigh so it does not 'drag', get twisted or tangled in clothing. Replace the tape if it becomes loose or dirty.
- Keep the catheter as straight as possible - if it kinks, this will stop the urine flowing properly into the collecting bag.
- Keep the collection bag below waist level but off the floor in case it gets trodden on.
- Your child should also avoid riding a bicycle or any other straddling toy as the catheter may become tangled and pull.
- Unless restricted encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids - this will keep the urine flowing, reduce any discomfort and reduce the risk of an infection developing.

EMPTYING THE COLLECTION BAG

You will need to empty the collection bag at least four times a day:

- 1.Wash your hands before and after emptying
- 2.Stand or sit your child near the toilet
- 3.Use a 'mediswab' to clean the exit tap then open the valve at the bottom of the bag
- 4.Empty the bag into the toilet
- 5.Close the valve
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CHANGING THE COLLECTION BAG

You should do this once a week, or if the bag becomes disconnected.

You will need: A new collection bag

1. Wash your hands before and after changing the bag
2. Bend the catheter over to stop urine leaking
3. Remove the bag from the catheter. There is a special valve at the top of the bag so it should not leak urine when you do this
4. Use a "mediswab" to clean the catheter end before connecting the new bag
5. Attach a new collecting bag
6. Straighten the catheter

FOLLOW UP

An outreach nurse from the ward will telephone you the following day wherever possible to check your child is making a good recovery. If indicated a home visit can be arranged to monitor your child's progress. Please tell the nurse the best time to contact you before you leave the ward.

YOU SHOULD CALL YOUR GP OR THE WARD IF:

- Your child's urine becomes infected.
- signs of infection include urine darker than usual, smelly or cloudy, a high temperature, pain, vomiting or blood in the urine. Encourage your child to drink more fluids and call the hospital.
- Your child has a sudden bout of pain
- this is usually a bladder spasm - encourage your child to drink several large drinks at once.
- Urine is not draining into the bag – the catheter may need flushing.
- Urine is leaking into your child's pants or nappy rather than the collection bag.
- The catheter falls out.

CONTACTS

If you have any worries or concerns please contact your GP or the ward your child was admitted to.

WARD 15 TELEPHONE NUMBER 0113 2065715