

## INFORMATION LEAFLETS FOR PARENTS / CARERS OF A CHILD WITH A URINARY CATHETER



### Urethral Catheter

A hollow tube placed in the bladder to drain urine. They are usually held in place by a small balloon of water which prevents it from slipping out. It will also be secured to your abdomen / groin with tape. Your Doctor / Nurse will decide how long it needs to stay in for. It may be put in place for a number of reasons, mainly after an operation or if your bladder is not emptying properly. Some people only require an indwelling catheter overnight. The reason for your catheter will be explained to you by your Doctor / Nurse.

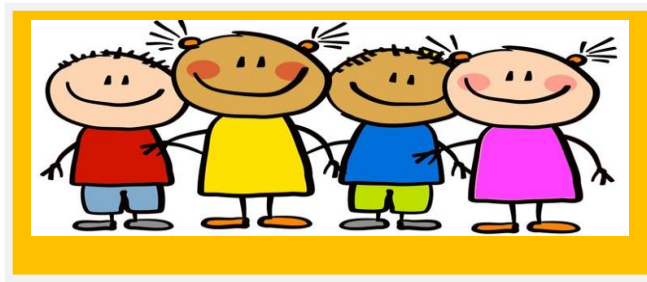
### Catheter Care

- Your catheter will be secured to your abdomen or groin with elastoplast tape.
- NEVER tape the catheter to the leg as this will cause tension on the catheter when you walk.
- Elastoplast must be changed when it gets wet or loosens.  
Secure the tape around the circumference of the catheter and onto the skin. The nurse will demonstrate this for you.
- Your catheter can drain 2 ways: leg bag or flipflo catheter valve. Your Doctor / Nurse will choose the best option for you.



Free drainage into a collection bag (leg bag), which is attached to your leg with 2 velcro straps. There is a tap on the end for you to empty the bag regularly during the day.

- Always ensure your straps are tight enough and empty the bag when it is roughly half full to prevent it getting too heavy and causing tension on the catheter.



A flipflo valve, may be used during the day. It fits into the end of the catheter and can be opened regularly to empty the bladder. This method allows for normal bladder cycling (filling/emptying).

- At night you will connect a larger bag to the leg bag/flipflo to drain overnight while you sleep.
- Shower as normal using a mild body wash. Cleanse the urethral opening gently.
- After the shower dry your leg bag and change your straps. Change your tapes if they are loose.
- Avoid the bath. You can “stand and splash” in a shallow bath if showering is not possible.
- Leg bag / Flipflo are changed weekly.
- Overnight bags are changed every night.

### Changing a Leg Bag *(empty before changing)*

- Gather your equipment and wash your hands.
- Clean the connection with an alcohol wipe.
- Gently maneuver the bag from the catheter opening, kink the catheter to prevent urine spillage.
- Connect the new bag ensuring it fits snugly into the catheter.



### Connecting Overnight Bag

- Gather your equipment and wash your hands.
- Clean the rubber bung of the leg bag / flipflo with an alcowipe.
- Remove the cap from the night bag and insert into the rubber bung.
- **OPEN THE TAP** to allow flow.
- In the morning, close the tap, remove the bag, empty contents into the toilet and discard the bag in the bin.

### Potential Complications

- **Urinary Tract Infection** - signs and symptoms may include temperature/tummy or back pain/cloudy or foul smelling urine/generally unwell/vomiting. Your child may require an antibiotic. Please contact the hospital or your GP.
- **Blood in urine** - friction from the catheter rubbing the inside of the bladder can cause pink/rose colour urine. Encourage plenty of water based fluids. If bleeding is excessive or fresh, please contact the hospital or your GP.
- **Pain / Spasm** - due to the catheter tip irritating the trigone, which is the sensitive area at the base of the bladder. Spasm often presents as a sharp gripping pain, which your child may feel in their bottom or penis. Encourage fluids. Contact the hospital or your GP as your child may require medication to help relax the bladder. This medication is often prescribed on discharge.
- **Urine not draining** - ensure the drainage bag is below the level of the bladder and the catheter is not kinked. Ensure your child is drinking enough.
- **Catheter falls out** - Contact the hospital. Your child can go to the toilet normally until you are reviewed.

### Importance of Hand Hygiene

A catheter associated urinary tract infection occurs, when germs enter the urinary tract through the catheter and cause infection. Good hand hygiene can reduce the risk of infections. ALWAYS wash your hands before and after handling the catheter, emptying the drainage bags or flipflo valve.



## NOTES

Developed by Liz Boyce, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Urology Dept  
Date issued: February 2018 / Date of review: November 2021

Disclaimer & Copyright ©2021, Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin, Dublin 12. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the copyright holder. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is accurate and in accord with standards accepted at the time of printing.