

YOUR GUIDE TO

Suprapubic Catheter Care

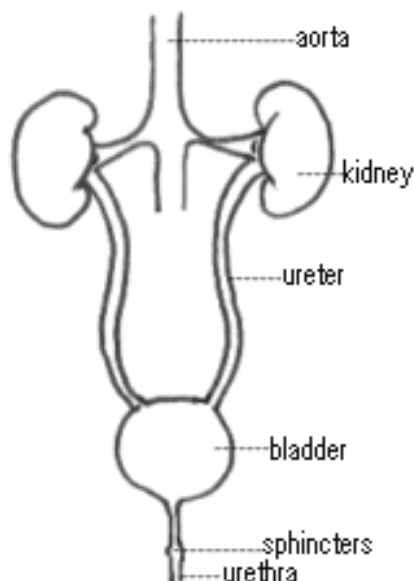
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THE BLADDER

The bladder is a hollow, muscular organ in the pelvis behind the pubic bone.

The function of the bladder is to collect, store and expel urine as the kidneys produce it. When the bladder is full, the nerves that supply it send a message to the brain that you need to pass urine. Then, under your control, the outlet pipe (urethra) muscles relax and the bladder contracts until it is empty of urine.

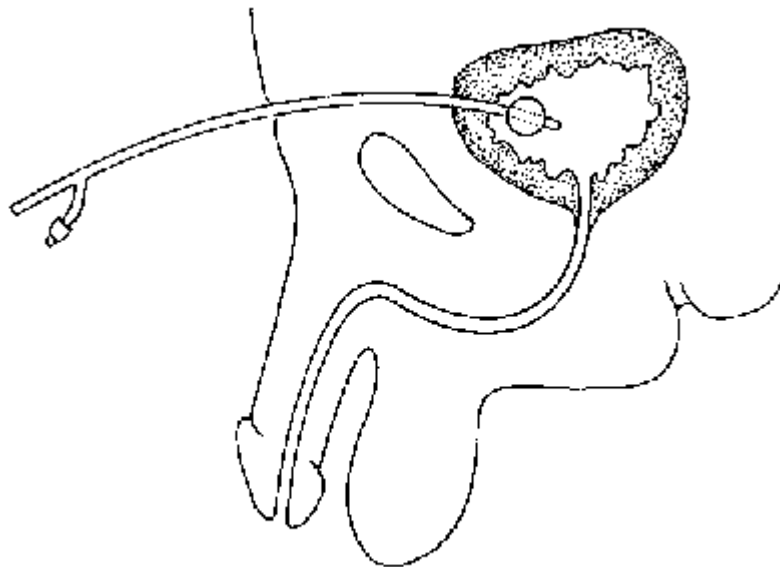


WHAT IS A SUPRAPUBIC CATHETER?

A **Suprapubic Catheter** or **SPC** is a small flexible tube that is inserted through the abdominal wall and into the bladder. It allows urine to pass outside the body without travelling down the urethra.

The Suprapubic Catheter is held in place by a balloon filled with water that rests against the wall of the bladder

The Suprapubic Catheter connects to a drainage bag with a tap at the bottom which enables the bag to be emptied.



Suprapubic Catheter

WHY IS IT NECESSARY AND HOW LONG WILL I HAVE IT?

Some of the reasons why a Suprapubic Catheter may be needed are listed below:

- The urethra is blocked and it is not possible to insert a urethral catheter
- To assess whether the bladder is emptying completely after certain surgery
- When urinary tract infections are a problem
- When you are sexually active and require a long term catheter
- For long term continence management
- For people with spinal cord injury

The length of time it is needed will depend on why it was inserted. Your Doctor will discuss this with you.

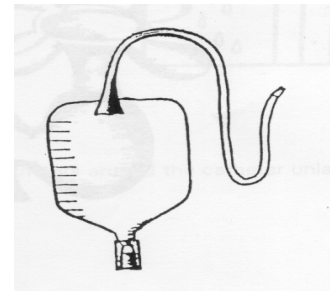
EQUIPMENT

There are two types of drainage bags.

The Leg Bag: This is attached directly to the catheter and will collect all the urine produced during the day



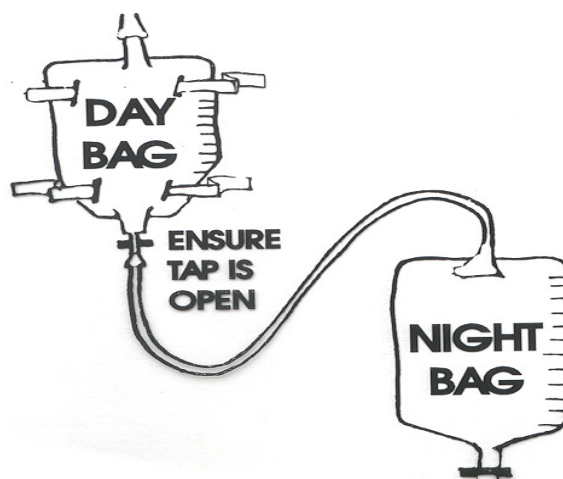
The Night Bag: Larger overnight drainage bag which is connected directly onto your leg bag.



For overnight drainage, you will need to connect the night bag to the day bag, as shown in the diagram below.

Begin with:

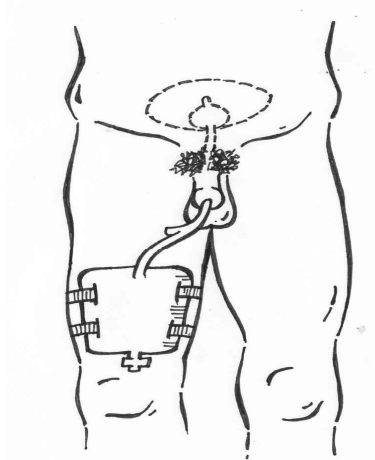
- Washing your hands thoroughly
- Then empty your day bag, and with the tap still open, push the end of the night tube into the small piece of tubing at the end of the tap.



PREVENT PULLING ON THE CATHETER

Traction or “pulling” on the catheter may cause discomfort and injury to the bladder. You can prevent pulling by:

- Wearing a leg bag during the day. This is strapped comfortably to your leg and will prevent you from treading on the tube
- Empty the bag regularly. It will become heavy when it is full
- DO NOT ALLOW THE DRAINAGE BAG TO DRAG ON THE FLOOR

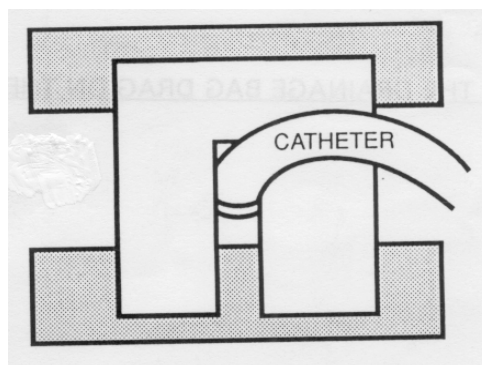


DRESSING THE SUPRAPUBIC CATHETER (SPC) SITE

Initially while the insertion site is healing, a new gauze dressing should be applied to the site three times a week or more frequently if required.

A keyhole dressing (a gauze square cut from one edge to the centre) is ideal to apply around the catheter. Secure the dressing and the catheter to the abdomen with non-irritating tape. When securing the catheter, ensure that the tubing is not kinked.

The Hospital and District Nurses will do the dressings until you feel confident to manage it yourself. They will also advise you when the insertion site no longer needs a dressing.



CATHETER CARE AND CLEANING

The following are guidelines for caring for your catheter at home:

HYGIENE

You should always wash your hands thoroughly before and after

- Emptying the drainage bag
- Changing the drainage bag
- Anytime the catheter is handled

GENERAL CARE

- Shower regularly – daily if possible
- When washing, make sure you clean the skin around the catheter thoroughly with warm water
- If you use soap, always rinse well or the soap may cause soreness and irritation
- Do not use creams, powders or ointments around the catheter unless a Doctor has prescribed them

CLEANING THE NIGHT BAG

- Empty the urine from the night bag down the toilet
- Wash the inside and outside of the night bag with warm, soapy water and then rinse with warm water to clear the soap
- After rinsing, shake off excess water and dry the outside with a clean towel or disposable towel. Recap the end of the tubing. Store the night bag in a clean, dry container with a lid. Do not leave the bag soaking in a solution as this will damage the bag

You will be provided with a supply of night bags. They will usually last a week unless they become discoloured or smell.

PROMOTING DRAINAGE

Unless your Doctor has told you otherwise, you are advised to drink approximately 2-3 litres of fluid a day. This is equal to about 8-10 cups. Your urine should be clear and light yellow colour.

Drinking plenty of fluids will help the catheter to drain, lessen the risk of infection and blockage of the catheter by debris.

PROMOTING DRAINAGE (continued)

Keep the leg bag lower than the bladder. If the drainage bag is raised higher than your bladder, urine will be unable to drain “downhill” into the bag.

The night bag should be placed lower than your bed. The bag may be placed flat on the floor or attached to the side of the bed. You may prefer to place the night bag in a bucket in case of leakage.

LEAKING AROUND THE CATHETER

You may experience some leaking from the urethra or around the SPC site. If you do, check the following:

- Is the catheter tubing kinked?
- Is the drainage bag too high? (ie above the level of your bladder)
- Is the drainage bag connected securely to the catheter?

If the drainage system is all right and the amount of leakage is small and infrequent, report it to your District Nurse when you are telephoned or visited.

If the leakage is ongoing, large in amount, or your catheter is not draining, contact your District Nurse or GP **immediately**. Your catheter may be blocked and it may need to be irrigated or replaced.

BLADDER SPASMS

These present as mild to severe pain or cramping caused by sudden bladder contractions. These can be caused by irritation from the catheter. Please contact your GP or District Nurse if this is not relieved by pain medication.

BLOCKAGE

If your catheter is not draining, check that the catheter tubing has no kinks and that the drainage bag is below the level of your bladder. Your catheter may be blocked and may require flushing or replacing. Contact your GP or District Nurse **immediately**

CATHETER FALLS OUT

If your catheter falls out, contact your GP or District Nurse **immediately**.

RECOGNISING INFECTION

A complication associated with catheterisation is infection. This is because a catheter provides a direct route for bacteria to enter the bladder.

Contact your GP **IMMEDIATELY** if you experience any or all of the symptoms listed below:

- Blood in the urine
- Cloudy appearance of urine
- Offensive smelling urine
- Tenderness over the bladder region or back
- Feeling unwell
- Fever or chills

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Your GP or District Nurse will help you to manage your catheter at home. Your District Nurse will visit you at home and give you practical help and advice.

GP:

DISTRICT NURSE:

SUPPLIES

When you are discharged from hospital, your nurse will provide you with a spare day bag and night bag. Further supplies will then be provided by your District Nurse.

LONG TERM SUPRAPUBIC CATHETER MANAGEMENT

Unless otherwise indicated or instructed, your first Suprapubic Catheter (SPC) change will be carried out by your District Nurse 8 weeks following insertion.

Following this, SPC changes will then be made at 4-12 week intervals.

The date for your first Suprapubic Catheter change has been scheduled
for:

..... at.....am/pm

Notes / Additional Appointments: