

# Postoperative instructions

## Instructions for caring for your vesical catheter



### Aim:

- To maintain good urinary drainage.
- To prevent infection.
- To keep the equipment clean.

### How to maintain good urinary drainage?

- Do not sit on your catheter.
- Make sure there are no bends or loops in the tubing.
- Keep the drainage bag below the level of your bladder.
- Empty the drainage bag (every two to four hours or more if necessary).
- Use the leg bag during the day and use the large bag at night.
- Drink at least one litre of fluids a day. Avoid acid drinks (eg. orange juice).
- Adjust the elastic leg straps so they do not cut off circulation or restrict any movements.

### How to prevent infections?

- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling equipment.
- Keep the catheter insertion site clean by washing the area with soap and water at least once or twice a day.
- When disconnecting the catheter, always clean the tubing where it has been disconnected with 70 per cent alcohol before reconnecting the catheter to the drainage bag. Do not allow it to touch anything during handling.

### How to keep the equipment clean?

- Empty the urine directly into the toilet.
- Clean your bags every day. Prepare a vinegar solution by mixing two ounces of vinegar with three ounces of cold water from the tap. Fill the drainage bag with this solution and let it sit for 20 minutes. Empty the bag and rinse the bag with water. Shake ten seconds. Hang it upside down and let it air dry.
- You may use chlorine bleach instead of vinegar. The mixture is one ounce of chlorine bleach and five ounces of water.
- It is important that you keep the caps of your drainage bags clean and stored in the pink container that the nursing personnel provided you before your discharge.

### Call your doctor or visit your nearest Emergency Department if:

- your urine is thick and cloudy
- your catheter comes out or it is leaking
- no urine has drained from your catheter in six to eight hours
- your urine has a strong smell
- you have pain or burning in your urethra, bladder, abdomen or lower back and/or
- you have chills or fever (your temperature is over 38.3 Celsius or 101 Fahrenheit)

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