Foley Catheter Care

A soft, flexible tube (*Foley catheter*) has been placed in your bladder. This may be done to temporarily help with urine drainage after an operation or to relieve blockage from an enlarged prostate gland.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

If you are going home with a Foley catheter in place, follow these instructions:

Taking Care of the Catheter:

- Keep the area where the catheter leaves your body clean.
- Attach the catheter to the leg so there is no tension on the catheter.
- Keep the drainage bag below the level of the bladder, but keep it OFF the floor.
- **Do not** take long soaking baths. Your caregiver will give instructions about showering.
- Wash your hands before touching ANYTHING related to the catheter or bag.
- Using mild soap and warm water on a washcloth:
  - Clean the area closest to the catheter insertion site using a circular motion around the catheter.
  - Clean the catheter itself by wiping AWAY from the insertion site for several inches down the tube.
  - NEVER wipe upward as this could sweep bacteria up into the urethra (*tube in your body that normally drains the bladder*) and cause infection.

Taking Care of the Drainage Bags:

- Two drainage bags will be taken home: a large overnight drainage bag, and a smaller leg bag which fits underneath clothing.
- It is okay to wear the overnight bag at any time, but NEVER wear the smaller leg bag at night.
- Keep the drainage bag well below the level of your bladder. This prevents backflow of urine into the bladder and allows the urine to drain freely.
- Anchor the tubing to your leg to prevent pulling or tension on the catheter. Use tape or a leg strap provided by the hospital.
- Empty the drainage bag when it is 1/2 to 3/4 full. Wash your hands before and after touching the bag.
- Periodically check the tubing for kinks to make sure there is no pressure on the tubing which could restrict the flow of urine.

Changing the Drainage Bags:

- Cleanse both ends of the clean bag with alcohol before changing.
- Pinch off the rubber catheter to avoid urine spillage during the disconnection.
- Disconnect the dirty bag and connect the clean one.
  - Empty the dirty bag carefully to avoid a urine spill.
- Attach the new bag to the leg with tape or a leg strap.

Cleaning the Drainage Bags:

- Whenever a drainage bag is disconnected, it must be cleaned quickly so it is ready for the next use.
- Wash the bag in warm, soapy water.
- Rinse the bag thoroughly with warm water.
- Soak the bag for 30 minutes in a solution of white vinegar and water (1 cup vinegar to 1 quart warm water).
- Rinse with warm water.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- Some pain develops in the kidney (lower back) area.
- The urine is cloudy or smells bad.

- There is some blood in the urine.
- The catheter becomes clogged and/or there is no urine drainage.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have moderate or severe pain in the kidney region.
- You start to throw up (*vomit*).
- Blood fills the tube.
- Worsening belly (*abdominal*) pain develops.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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