

INDWELLING URINARY CATHETER CARE AT HOME

HEMOCARE GUIDELINE[®]

INTRODUCTION

An indwelling catheter (IDC) is a hollow tube, generally made of silicone. The rounded tip of the catheter has several holes and when inserted into the bladder through the urethra, these holes allow urine to drain out of the bladder. The catheter is usually held in place by a balloon filled with sterile water. This balloon is meant to stop the catheter falling out. The catheter is inserted using a sterile procedure. The catheter is usually secured to the abdomen or upper thigh using tape.

Children are discharged home with an indwelling catheter in place for a number of reasons. This can include:

- To support and rest the urethra after abdominal or urological surgery
- To drain a bladder that is not working due to damage of the nerves that supply the bladder. This is often called a neurogenic bladder.

In younger children who wear nappies, the IDC usually drains into the nappy. In older children the catheter is attached to a sterile urine drainage bag that needs to be emptied at regular times. It is possible to attach a catheter valve (e.g. flip-flow valve) to the end of the catheter. This valve works like a tap to allow the bladder to be emptied at set times during the day. An overnight drainage bag can be attached to the valve for nighttime use.

CARE OF THE CATHETER

There are three main areas to consider when looking after the catheter at home, hygiene, preventing blockage and accidental removal.

Hygiene:

It is important to clean the area where the catheter enters the body to stop crust formation and to prevent infection. Washing with soap and water as part of the normal bathing routine will keep the area clean. In children whose catheter drains into a nappy, it is important to prevent the catheter being in contact with bowel motions (faeces) whenever possible. Taping the catheter onto the lower part of the abdomen can help to keep it away from faecal matter. If the catheter becomes dirty with faeces, it should be cleaned with soap and water as soon as possible. Parents or carers need to make sure they have clean hands before and after touching urinary catheter or emptying urine drainage bag.

Preventing blockage:

Making sure that your child drinks plenty of fluids can help prevent the catheter from getting blocked by bladder debris and reduce the risk of infection. The catheter should be checked to ensure that it does not become kinked or bent as this will block the flow of urine. Signs of a blocked catheter include pain and/or swelling in the lower abdomen or urine flowing around the outside of the catheter. If a blockage is suspected or fresh blood observed your child needs to be taken to a hospital for medical attention.

Preventing accidental removal:

Accidental removal may be prevented by careful taping of the catheter to the abdomen out of sight of the child. (NOTE: this is particularly important when the child is young and is likely to pull on the catheter or if the catheter is likely to get caught on something during play). If a drainage bag is being used, care should be taken to empty the bag at regular times to prevent weight pulling on the catheter. A smaller leg bag which is strapped to the thigh can be used or a catheter valve. If accidental removal of the catheter occurs your child should be brought back to The Children's Hospital or the closest hospital if you live a long distance away.

Supplies:

You should be given enough supplies on discharge from hospital for seven days or you may purchase extra urine drainage bags and catheter valves from Brightsky Australia (Paraquand NSW) Phone: 1300 88 66 01 or online www.brightsky.com.au.

For any concerns or problems please contact your admitting team or attend Emergency Department.