

Home Care For Your Foley Catheter (Female)

Purpose:

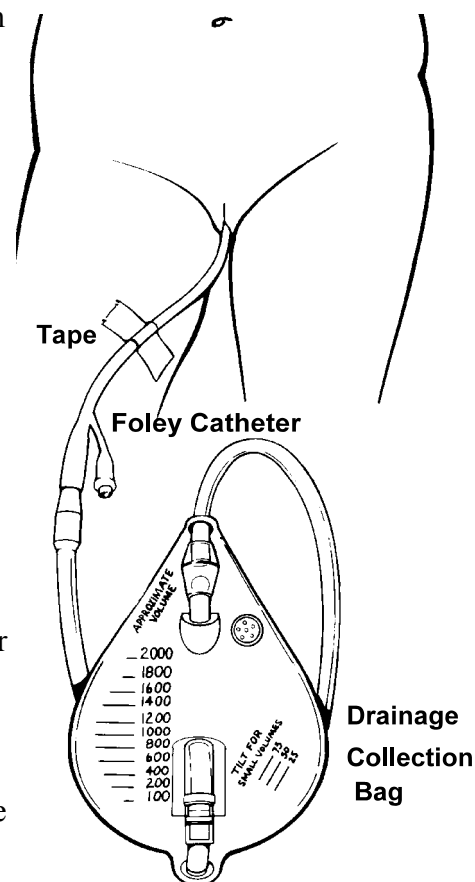
A Foley catheter is a flexible tube that is put into your bladder to drain urine. It is put into the urinary opening (urethra). The catheter is held in place by a small water-filled balloon inside your bladder.

Supplies:

- Soap and water
- Washcloth and towel
- Tape or leg strap

Care Of The Foley Catheter:

- Gather supplies
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Look carefully at the place where the catheter leaves your body. It may help to use a mirror. Check for any swelling, redness, or drainage, like blood or pus.
- Gently wash this area with soap and water. Be sure to wash the catheter as well as your entire pubic area. Rinse thoroughly and dry. Be careful not to pull on the tube.
- Wash around the catheter two times every day, in the morning and in the evening.
- Secure the catheter to your upper thigh with a leg strap or tape. If the leg strap becomes dirty, wash it with soap and water.



Care of Your Drainage Bag

Your foley needs to be connected to a drainage bag. You may use a larger drainage bag that attaches to your bed or wheelchair. Some people like to use a smaller leg bag when they are up walking or up in a chair. With either type of drainage bag, there are some things you will need to do:

- Be sure that the tubing to the drainage bag is below the level of your bladder. This is done so the urine doesn't drain back to put you at risk of infection.
- Keep the tubing free of kinks so the urine can flow easily. This also keeps the urine from backing back into your bladder.

- Empty your drainage bag when it is just over half full. Remember, the smaller leg bag will need to be emptied more often than your larger bag. You should also empty the drainage bag when you go from one type of drainage bag to another. (Read the handout Leg Bag for instructions on changing from the larger to the smaller drainage bag.)
- Use a container that has measure markings so you know how much urine you are passing. Mark the amount with the date and time on a paper or in a notebook so you can track the urine flow for your doctor. Here is an example of what to right down:

Date	Time	Amount Drained (ounces or cc's)	Color, smell

- Note the color and smell of your urine. Healthy urine should be clear and a yellow color with a mild smell. Talk to your doctor or nurse about what you can expect if you have had bleeding or an infection in your urine.
- Be sure to close the clamp on the drainage bag after you drain the urine.
- Change to a new drainage bag every month, or if there is a leak in the tubing.
- Clean your drainage bags every few days with a mixture of vinegar and water. Mix 1½ cups of vinegar in 2 quarts of water. Pour the vinegar water mix in through the drain and swish it around in the bag. Lay the bag in the bottom of a bathtub or sink for about 30 minutes to soak. Be sure the tubing is full of the mixture too. Drain the mixture back out and rinse with clean water. Dry the outside of the bag and tubing. Do not use a bleach solution on the bag or tubing because it can damage the bag and tubing.

When To Call Your Health Care Professional:

- Urine is cloudy and / or has a foul odor
- Temperature is 101 degrees or higher
- Unusual itching, rash, burning or drainage near or at the Foley exit site
- A feeling of bladder fullness and / or concern that the Foley is plugged
- Blood in your urine

- No urine drainage
- Urine leaking around the tube
- Foley catheter falls out

If you need to call about a problem:

- Take your temperature and write it down.
- Carefully describe the problem as detailed as you can. For example, if the problem is pain, state where the pain is, what it feels like (sharp, dull, burning) and when it occurs. Write the information down to help you remember.
- Gather all the information from above and bring it and a piece of paper and a pencil with you to the phone.
- You are now ready to call your doctor or nurse.

If you would like more written information, please call the Center for Health Information at (614)293-3707. You can also make the request by e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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The Ohio State University Medical Center
- ▶ Upon request all patient education handouts are available in other formats for people with special hearing, vision and language needs, call (614) 293-3191.