

What is a Suprapubic Catheter?

A suprapubic catheter is a tube placed in your child's bladder and exits through the abdominal wall. It is used to drain urine from your child's bladder. It is very important to you take good care of the catheter as it must be kept very clean and secure. Good care will help to prevent:

- ✓ the catheter becoming dislodged
- ✓ the introduction of bacteria that can lead to a urinary tract infection.

The suprapubic catheter is held in place by a few stitches. The catheter is attached to a piece of plastic tubing with a drainage bag to collect urine. Check the drainage bag every three to four hours to make sure the catheter is draining urine from the bladder. Open the spout on the bag and empty it before it is full.

How do I Clean the Catheter Site?

Each day check the skin around the catheter site. There may be some discharge. You can clean around the catheter with soap and water. It will not hurt.

- 1) Wash your hands with soap and water.
- 2) Use a clean, warm soapy wash cloth to gently remove any debris (dirt or loose particles) from the skin surrounding the catheter site. A little redness of the surrounding skin is normal from the irritation of the tube.

- 3) Rinse the skin and the catheter with clean, warm water. Pat dry with a clean towel.
- 4) You can slit a gauze pad to place around the catheter exit site to help soak up any drainage and keep the area clean.

Can My Child Have a Bath?

While your child has this tube, he/she will need to sponge bath or shower. Your child cannot soak in the bath tub or go swimming until approved by your physician.

How Do I Change the Drainage Bag?

Drainage bags come in two sizes:

- 1) a smaller leg bag that can be worn under clothing, allowing your child the freedom to dress and move about easily. This smaller bag needs to be emptied more often as it holds less urine.
- 2) a larger overnight bag.

If you will be changing the bag at home, a nurse will show you how to do this and give you the bag(s) you will need. The principals are the same anytime you enter the urine drainage system. *It is a clean procedure.* The following directions will help you to remember this procedure when you go home:

- 1) Gather your supplies.
- 2) Wash your hands.
- 3) Gently disconnect the drainage bag tubing from the catheter, being careful not to touch the open connections.
- 4) Reconnect the catheter to your new bag.
- 5) You may want to tape the connection site (if you have a very active child) to prevent the bag tubing from becoming accidentally separated from the catheter.
- 6) You do not need to use a mask or surgical gloves.

General Guidelines for Home Care

- Every two days, rinse the drainage bag with water. Do not add soap, vinegar or any other detergent to water. You can rinse it more often if the drainage bag becomes dirty and/or develops a foul odour.
- Tape the catheter securely to your child's abdomen or leg to prevent any tension or pulling on the catheter that may result in the catheter becoming accidentally dislodged or removed.
- Attach the leg drainage bag to your child's leg with the straps provided. If your child has a Latex allergy, be sure to check if straps contain latex.

- Always make sure that the drainage bag is below the level of your child's bladder to prevent back flow of urine into the bladder.
- Be sure there are no kinks or bends in the tubing, as this would prevent the free drainage of urine from the bladder.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids. The urine should be light yellow in colour.

Irrigating (Flushing) the Suprapubic Catheter

If your child's bladder was augmented (made bigger), we recommend that you flush the suprapubic catheter at least twice a day. Bowel tissue is used as a "patch" in order to make the bladder bigger, and creates a lot of mucous. It will continue to do this even if it is now part of the bladder. You will notice small particles of mucous floating in your child's urine. This is normal and will not disappear. Mucous production can contribute to bacterial growth, urinary tract infection, urinary stone formation and catheter clogging. A clogged catheter can lead to a bladder rupture. Flushing the bladder with saline (salt water) will keep the catheter open and help to prevent these complications.

A nurse will show you how to flush

the suprapubic catheter and give you a few days of the supplies you will need. Supplies are available at most pharmacies. The following directions will help you remember this procedure when you get home:

Making saline at home:

- 1) Mix 1 cup of water and ½ teaspoon of salt.
- 2) Boil for five minutes.
- 3) Boil the container in which you store the saline for five minutes before filling it.
- 4) Store the saline in the refrigerator for no more than one week.

Flushing the catheter

- 1) Fill a 60cc syringe with saline (about 4 tablespoons).
- 2) Disconnect the catheter from the tubing.
- 3) Slip the syringe into the catheter.
- 4) Push the plunger gently to force the saline into the catheter.
- 5) Without taking the syringe out of the catheter, pull the saline back into the syringe. You may notice lots of mucous coming out as you withdraw the fluid. Disconnect the syringe and discard the urine you just removed. You may need to repeat the flush until there is no more mucous.

- 6) If the fluid does not come back easily into the syringe, leave the saline to empty from the bladder with the urine.
- 7) Reconnect the tubing.

Call the Urology clinic if:

- Your child is leaking urine from the suprapubic catheter site.
- The suprapubic catheter is not draining urine even after flushing with saline.
- The catheter has come out.
- You see signs of infection:
 - your child has a fever
 - your child’s urine becomes more cloudy than usual or is foul smelling
 - the catheter site is red or has green discharge

Contact your local Emergency Dept if the catheter falls out outside of clinic hours. (Mon-Fri 8-4pm).

You can call the Urology Nurse Clinician at 604-875-2889 if you have any questions or concerns.

Developed by the health care professionals of the Urology Department with assistance from the Department of Learning and Development

All rights reserved. No part of this pamphlet may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means now known to be invented, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without written permission from the authors or publisher, except for brief inclusion of quotations in a review.

Home Care of a Suprapubic Catheter

