

Suprapubic Urinary Catheter Care

- You have been sent home with a suprapubic urinary catheter, or SP tube. These tubes are inserted through your lower abdominal wall into your bladder. The tube will be removed when your bladder has healed and you are able to urinate adequately.
- The catheter is a hollow tube with a hole on each end. Many types of SP tubes exist, but the most common is called the Foley Catheter. A side arm can be seen on the catheter, and this allows a small balloon to be filled in the bladder, so that the catheter does not fall out.
- The catheter needs to be connected to a drainage bag to allow continuous drainage. It is important not to block the flow of urine, unless you are specifically asked to do so.

Care: The major cause of irritation is at the exit site of the SP tube from the abdomen. Sometimes a silk suture is placed to secure the catheter, and this can also be a source of irritation. You should wash this area with a mild soap and water daily. Hydrogen peroxide, available at any pharmacy, is also effective in cleaning around the tube. Do not place Vaseline or any ointments around the catheter unless specifically instructed to do so.

In most cases, you will have less irritation at the exit site if the catheter is not pulling tightly. Tape the catheter to the skin so that it has gentle curve on its way to the drainage bag. Tape is the best and least expensive way of securing the catheter. Movement or tugging on the catheter will then pull on the tape, not on the skin and bladder.

Drainage Bags: The plastic bags to which the catheter is connected. The bags vary in design, but all have a connection adaptor for the catheter and a drainage port or spigot, at the bottom to empty the bag. Some bags have long tubes so that they can be attached to the bed or be carried. Other bags have no tubing and must be attached to the leg with straps.

- **Emptying the Bags:** Hold any bag over the toilet of suitable container, and open the spigot at the bottom of the bag. Let urine flow until empty and then close the spigot.
- **Cleaning the Bags:** Rinse bags with warm water and soap every day or two, depending on how dirty and how much odor is present. One teaspoon of vinegar may be used in the rinse water to reduce the odor.

Problems: The more urine flows, the less the chance for a blockage. You should be drinking 4-8 ounces of water every hour while awake.

Bleeding: Bleeding can be seen on occasion with any catheter. Small amounts are normal; if bleeding causes you not to be able to see through the urine, contact your physician.

Blockage: Urine should drain constantly into the bag. No flow for more than an hour, with the urge to urinate, may mean that you have a blockage of the tube. Please contact your physician to have the tube flushed, or changed.

Fever: If you develop a fever of greater than 101 degrees, notify your physician.

For more information, or to make an appointment, please call (516) 627-6188 Extension 149 or visit our website <http://www.urologyassociatespc.com>