

## Managing a Urinary Catheter Valve

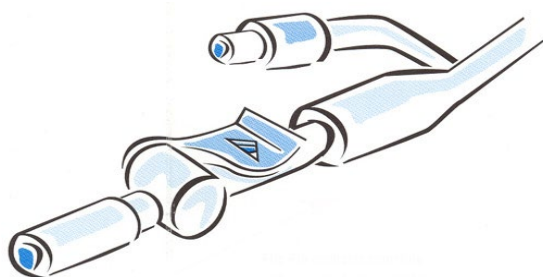
### What is a urinary catheter valve?

A urinary catheter valve is like having a tap fitted to a catheter instead of a drainage bag. Your clinician will advise you if it will be appropriate for you. Catheter valves can be used on urethral or supra pubic catheters.

Your bladder will be used to store urine which is then drained via the catheter. It is very important that you open the valve and empty your bladder **when you feel the need to pass urine** or at least **four hourly**. Do not leave your bladder overfull.

A catheter valve (valve) is inserted into the catheter and operated either by an up or down lever or a sliding tap to open and close it. The catheter and valve will usually lie across the base of your tummy, held in place by your underwear. If you wear loose fitting underwear, then it is important the catheter is secured by a strap to the leg or securing device to minimise the risk of trauma to the urethra or supra pubic catheter site.

It is usual at night to attach a night drainage bag to the bottom of the valve, opening the valve urine will drain into the night bag. In the morning close the valve and remove the night drainage bag, rinse and store it with the cap on for the next night.



There are many brands of valves, catheters and drainage bags all of which are designed to fit each other. The valve will need changing **once a week**, just the same as most drainage bags. They can be obtained via prescription or added to a home delivery service.

### What are the alternatives?

You can continue using urine drainage bags.

### What are the potential risks and side effects?

Hand hygiene is very important when managing catheters, valves and drainage bags. To minimise the risk of urinary infection always wash your hands before handling the valve and afterwards. Never touch the end of the catheter, valve or drainage bag as you join them together.

### What are the expected benefits of treatment?

The use of a catheter valve provides very discreet catheter management; you may feel more comfortable when wearing close fitting clothes, for swimming or when sexually active.

Using a valve will allow the bladder to fill and therefore help retain bladder tone, this is important if it is planned for you to have the catheter removed at a future date.

## Sources of information

If you require further information, please contact a member of the nursing team:

Urology Department - Conquest Hospital - Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 8468 or 8344  
Urology Investigation Suite - Eastbourne DGH - Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 770640

## Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

## Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net).

## Hand hygiene

We are committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering

## Other formats

**If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

---

---

---

## Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Rebecca Rushton, Specialist Urology Diagnostic Nurse

Penny Whitling, Urology Nurse Practitioner. Simon Tyler-Murphy, Lead Nurse - Urology and Acute Continence Service.

The directorate group that has agreed this patient information leaflet:

Diagnostic, Anaesthetic and Surgery - Urology

Next review date: July 2026

Responsible clinician/author: Susan Crosby-Jones, Matron, Urology Investigation Suite

© East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust – [www.esht.nhs.uk](http://www.esht.nhs.uk)