

Care in the Hospital: Preventing a Urinary Catheter Infection

While you're in the hospital, your body may need extra help to do some of the things it usually does on its own.

During this time, you may need to have a urinary catheter.

A urinary catheter is a tube that's put inside your body when you can't urinate on your own.

To keep the catheter in place in your bladder, a small balloon is inflated at the tip of the catheter.

The catheter then lets urine flow from your bladder into a bag outside your body.

You might not notice the catheter while it's in place.

If you do notice it, it may make you feel like you need to urinate.

This is a normal feeling.

Remember, it may take some time to get used to the catheter.

Now, preventing infection is always an important part of your care while you're in the hospital.

But when you're using a urinary catheter, it's very important to take extra steps to try to help avoid infection.

But don't worry.

Your care team will work hard to prevent infection.

And there are things you can do to help too.

Keep in mind, a catheter will only be inserted if it's necessary for your care.

And the catheter will be removed as soon as it's safe to do so.

Your care team will always wash their hands before touching the catheter.

They'll also keep the area around the catheter clean.

And, from time to time, they will check the level of urine in the bag.

They will carefully empty the bag when it needs to be emptied.

Your care team will also watch for signs of infection, like a new fever, chills, pain in your back or lower belly, or confusion.

They'll also watch for urine that becomes cloudy or bloody.

They'll also look for problems with the catheter, such as twists or kinks in the tubing.

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And they'll make sure the bag is positioned below the bladder.

There are things you can do to help prevent infection too.

Make sure your hands are clean before touching the area around the catheter.

And the urine bag should be positioned below the level of the bladder.

If you notice the bag isn't where it should be, and you can't move it yourself, ask your care team for help.

Also, be careful not to tug or pull on the tubing.

Be sure to use your call button or tell your care team if you think you may be having problems with the catheter.

For example, let your care team know if you're in pain or if the tubing seems to be kinked or twisted.

Also tell your care team if you notice any signs of infection.

Remember that these signs could include pain in your back or lower belly, fever, or chills.

And tell your care team if you notice that your urine is cloudy or bloody.

Being in the hospital can be hard, but your care team is there to help you heal.

And remember if you have any questions, you can always ask your care team.