



# Patient Guide: Preventing Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection

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We care about your health and strive to provide all of our patients with excellent care.

This brochure describes the measures we are taking to prevent our patients from developing catheter-associated urinary tract infections (UTIs) and the things that you can do to help prevent this type of infection.

## What is a Urinary Catheter?

This is a soft, flexible tube that is placed into the bladder through the urethra. This allows the urine to drain from your bladder into a bag that may hang at the bedside or it can be strapped to your leg. A catheter may be needed for your care, but the presence of a catheter raises the chance of developing a UTI.

## How do we reduce the Risk of Infections with Catheters?

We will use measures that lower the risk of bringing germs into your bladder when a catheter placed:

- We will practice hand hygiene by washing our hands with soap and water or by using an alcohol-based hand rub prior to placing the catheter
- We will wear sterile gloves
- We will wipe the area around the urethra with a special skin cleaner
- We will drape the area around the urethra with a sterile paper to prevent getting germs on the catheter
- We will teach you to care for your catheter if you go home with it
- We will teach you how to identify the signs and symptoms of a UTI

## **Catheter Care in the Hospital**

- We will clean our hands using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub prior to caring for you.
- We will clean the portion of the catheter that is outside your body and the perineal area as often as needed.
- We will empty the urine collection bag as often as needed and take care not to bring germs into the catheter.
- We will remove the catheter as soon as it is not needed for your care.
- We will observe you closely so that we can detect and treat you if a UTI develops.

## **How can YOU help to Prevent Catheter-Associated UTI?**

You are a central part of the health care team and you can help us prevent catheter-associated UTI.

- You can remind health care workers to use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub to clean their hands when they enter and exit your room.
- Follow all instructions on caring for your catheter.
- Tell your doctor or nurse if you have signs and symptoms of UTI.
- Drink plenty of fluids.

## **When should you call your Doctor?**

These listed signs may mean that you have a UTI. You should let your doctor know if you have any of these symptoms.

- Cloudy urine.
- Grainy sediment (clumps in the urine).
- Foul-smelling urine.
- Pain in your lower back or abdomen.
- Burning in the urinary tract, penis, or genital area.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Chills or fever greater than 100 degrees.