

## Catheter Irrigation

You may need to irrigate your catheter if you have:

- Large blood clots
- Large pieces of mucus
- Very little draining from your catheter
- Strong, painful urge to urinate
- Urine leaking around catheter
- Unusual, sudden feeling of sweating, 'racing heart,' or headache

We will teach you how often you should do this.

### Steps to Irrigate Your Catheter

1. **Wash your hands.**
2. Open the irrigation tray.
3. Pull back on the syringe. Pull out the blue pin and pump the syringe a few times.
4. Place a clean towel or drape under the catheter connection site.
5. Pour saline into the container we gave you.
6. Do not let the syringe touch anything except the saline container and catheter.
7. Draw up 30ml of saline into syringe.
8. Twist to separate the catheter from the tubing. Do not let the catheter or tip of tubing touch anything (it needs to stay sterile).
9. If the catheter or tip of tubing touch anything, clean it with alcohol.
10. You can now set the clear drainage bag tubing on the clean towel or sterile drape.

11. Insert the saline-filled syringe into the large port of the catheter.
12. Gently push the saline into the catheter.
13. Pull back on the plunger of the syringe gently.
  - The catheter should now start draining. If it does not, repeat steps 1-13.

You may draw back some clots or bloody urine, or you may not be able to draw back on the syringe. Let your doctor know about the clots. If you draw back clots, squirt them into a waste bin. Repeat steps 7-13 until there are no clots.

14. Last, use an alcohol swab to clean both ends of the tubes and connect them.

### When to Call

If the catheter is still not draining, call your doctor's office right away. You may need to go to the nearest emergency room.

### Who to Call

Urology Clinic: Monday-Friday, 8-4:30pm,  
**(608) 263-4757**

Gynecology Clinic: Monday- Friday 8-4:30 pm,  
**(608) 263-6240**

Urology at The American Center  
**(608) 440-6464**

After hours call paging, **(608) 262-2122** and ask for the urology or gynecology resident on call.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 8/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7771