

Indwelling Urine Catheter: Irrigation

Why do I need to irrigate the catheter?

This procedure will help keep the catheter open so the urine drains. You will need to irrigate the catheter if:

- No urine comes through the catheter in 2 hours.
- Urine is leaking around the catheter.
- You can see flakes or other materials in the urine.

What will I need?

- Sterile water or tap water.
- Catheter-tip syringe.
- Alcohol wipes.

How do I irrigate the catheter?

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
2. Pour the water into a clean container.
3. Fill the syringe with _____ cc's of water. **Do not** let the tip of the syringe touch anything. If the tip does touch something, clean the tip with an alcohol wipe.
4. If a leg bag is used, disconnect the catheter from the leg bag. Do not let the ends of the tubes touch anything. Clean the end with an alcohol wipe if it does touch something. If your child wears a double diaper, open both diapers.
5. Connect the syringe to the end of the catheter. Push the water in slowly over 30 to 60 seconds. If it is hard to push the water in, check to be sure the tube is not kinked.
6. After the fluid is in, pull back gently on the plunger. Try to pull back _____ cc's of fluid. It is okay if you don't get that much fluid back.
7. Disconnect the syringe from the tubing. Look to see if fluid drips from the end of the catheter. If it does, reconnect the tube to the leg bag or put your child's diaper back on. If it doesn't, repeat steps 5 and 6 up to two (2) more times.

How do I clean the syringe?

- If the catheter is being irrigated **more than once a day**:
 - Pull the plunger out of the syringe. Rinse both parts with tap water. Let the parts dry on a clean towel. Cover them with a second clean towel between uses. A syringe can be used for up to 2 weeks. **Be sure to clean the syringe** with soap and water after each use.
- If the catheter is being irrigated **once a day or less**:
 - Use new supplies each time.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if:

- You have tried to irrigate the catheter and it is still not draining.
- Your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.