

# Home Care for Your Nephrostomy Catheter - The James

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This handout tells you how to care for your nephrostomy catheter. If you have any questions about this information, you may call **Interventional Radiology** at (614) 293-2773.

## What can I expect after this procedure?

You were given medicine through your IV to help you relax during the placement of your catheter. This medicine may cause you to feel sleepy, dizzy or tired for hours after the procedure.

## During the first 24 to 48 hours after this procedure you should do the following:

- Go home and rest for the remainder of the day.
- **Do not** drive or work around any mechanical equipment, sharp objects, power tools or appliances until the day after your procedure.
- **Do not make any major life or legal decisions for at least 24 hours** after your procedure because the medicine you were given may make you unable to think clearly or remember your actions.
- Eat light foods, like jell-o, pudding, soups, juices and other liquids. Return to your normal diet as tolerated.
- After your procedure, you will be told if you need to wait before you restart your normal medicines. It is important to drink water to help get rid of the dye from your body.
- The area where the IV was used for the procedure may be tender for a day or two. Use warm moist compresses on the area for 20 minutes every day. If the area gets more red, swollen or tender after 2 or 3 days, call your doctor.

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**This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

- Bruising or tenderness where the nephrostomy catheter was placed is common. The area may have very mild bruising or become black and blue. The bruising can be as large as the size of a golf ball. These signs may last for 2 weeks or longer. Apply warm moist compresses to the area for 20 minutes 2 or 3 times a day to help with this problem. **Be sure to cover your dressing with plastic wrap first to keep it dry.**
- **Check your temperature each day** the catheter is in place.

**Call (614) 293-2773 or go to the nearest Emergency Room if you have any of the following during the first 4 to 8 hours after your nephrostomy catheter was put in:**

- Active bleeding at the catheter site that does not stop when you put finger pressure on the area
- Increased pain or swelling at or around the catheter site
- Fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 Celsius) or higher with or without chills

## **Skin Care and Showering**

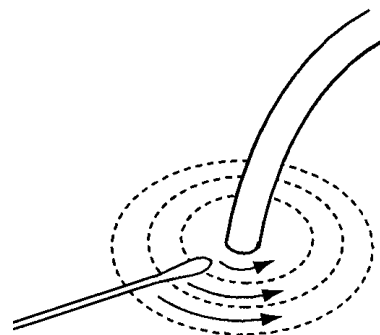
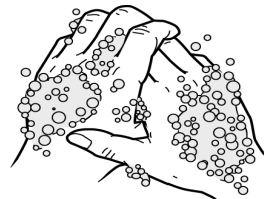
- Keep the area where the nephrostomy catheter is placed dry.
- You may take a shower 48 hours after your procedure, but you need to keep the area dry while in the shower.
- Before you shower, cover the catheter dressing and the skin around the area with plastic wrap taped to your skin. **You must cover the area when showering for 14 days after your procedure.**
- After 14 days, if the area has healed, you can shower without the dressing and plastic wrap. At the end of your shower, use a clean washcloth and liquid antibacterial soap, such as Dial, with water to clean the area around your catheter. Then rinse the area well with plain water and pat gently with a towel to dry.
- **Do not** bathe in a tub, use a hot tub or swim as long as you have the catheter in place.

## Dressing Change

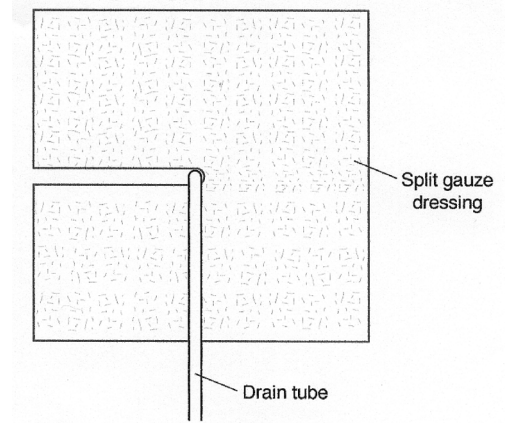
A gauze dressing should be changed every other day, but if you have a transparent dressing, it is changed every 72 hours. Either type of dressing should be changed if it gets wet or the edges become loose.

### Steps

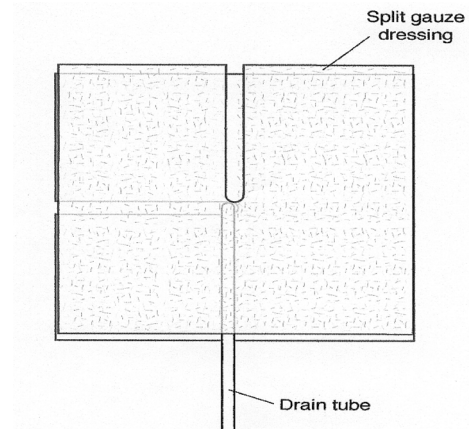
1. Gather your supplies.
  - ▶ 2 pairs of non-sterile gloves
  - ▶ Cotton swabs or clean washcloths
  - ▶ Antibacterial soap
  - ▶ 4x4 gauze split dressings (package of two)
  - ▶ Paper tape if gauze dressing is used
  - ▶ Small plastic garbage bag
2. Wash your hands with soap and water for 15 seconds. Rinse and towel dry.
3. Put on the non-sterile gloves.
4. Carefully remove the old dressing to prevent pulling the catheter out. Check the skin around the tube for any redness, swelling, warmth or a bad smelling drainage. These problems may be a sign of infection. If you have any of these problems, clean the skin and change the dressing more often for one week. If the signs do not improve right away, call your doctor.
5. Remove the non-sterile gloves and wash your hands again. Then put on the other clean pair of gloves.
6. Clean the skin around the catheter. Start at the center where the tube comes out of the skin. Use a circular motion to clean the skin around the tube. Slowly move out and away from the tube 3 to 4 inches. **Do not** clean back towards the tube. Let the skin dry. **Do not** fan the area to speed the drying because that will put more germs near the site. If the antibacterial soap irritates your skin, use sterile saline to clean the area. **Do not** use alcohol, peroxide or betadine to clean the area around the catheter. These products can cause your skin to become irritated.



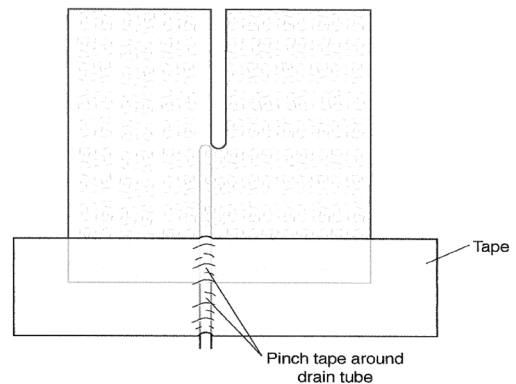
7. Open the 4 x 4 split gauze dressing package and remove the gauze pad. Touch **only** the edges of the gauze pad. Put the gauze around the tube as shown in the picture.



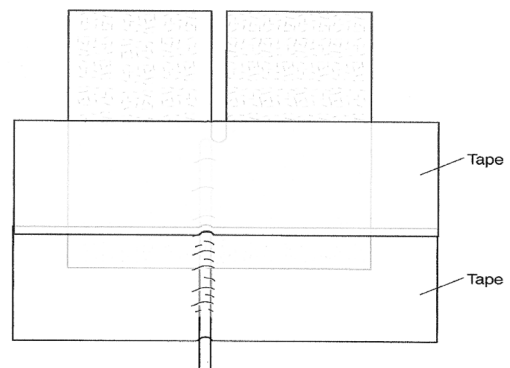
8. If you are directed to use a second split gauze dressing, place it over the first gauze dressing. Place the second gauze to cover the tube as shown in the picture.



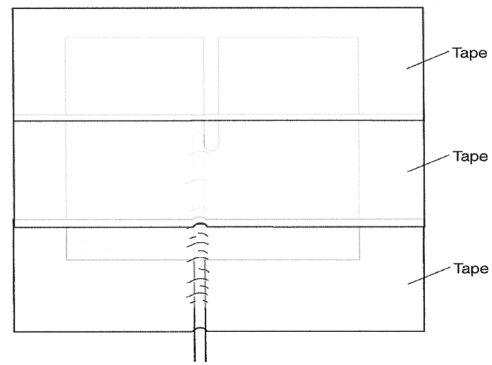
9. Tape the dressing in place. If you are to cover the whole dressing, use 3 pieces of tape. Put the first piece of tape where the tube comes out from under the dressing. Pinch the tape around the tube so it will not move if it gets pulled.



10. Put the second piece of tape over the center of the dressing so the edges of the tapes just overlap.



11. Then put a third piece of tape to cover the rest of the dressing.



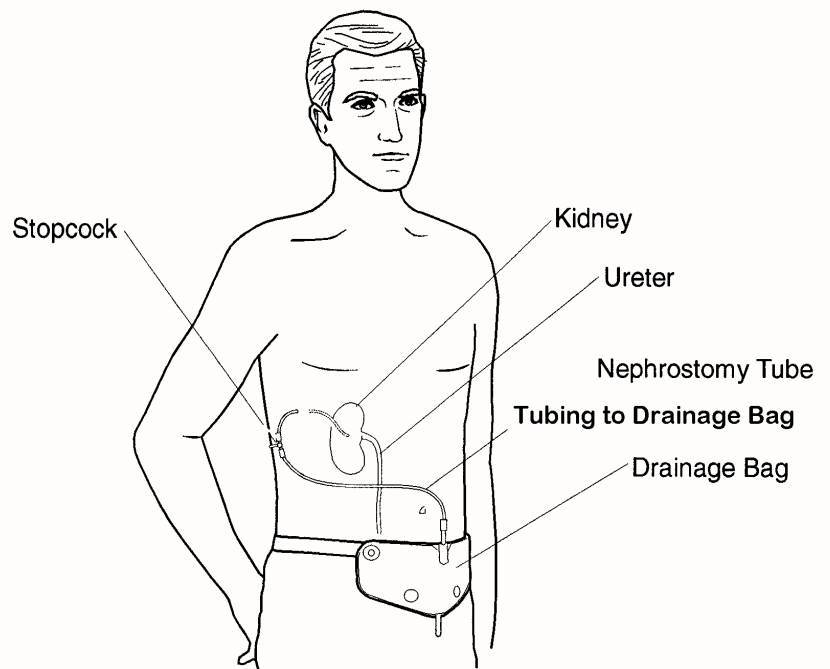
12. Wash your hands with soap and warm water. Rinse and towel dry.

## Care of Your Drainage Bag

- Empty your drainage bag as often as needed when it is about 2/3 full. Turn the blue knob at the bottom of the bag and drain it into a measuring container. Keep track of the amount of drainage each day.
- You should not clean the drainage bag. You will be sent home with an extra drainage bag to use if there is a leak in the bag or the bag or tubing gets damaged.

## Special Precautions and Problems

- Keep the drainage bag below the level of your kidneys at all times, to prevent a back flow of urine into the kidneys.  
**Note:** your drainage bag may be different from the one in the picture.
- To prevent sludge and calculi or stones from forming, drink 6 to 8 glasses (8-ounce glass) of fluids a day.
- Keep your nephrostomy catheter drainage bag closed to reduce risk of infection.
- Keep the nephrostomy catheter and drainage bag tubing free of twists, kinks or leaks.



## When to Call Your Doctor

**Call Interventional Radiology right away, at (614) 293-2773, if you have any of these problems:**

- Sudden decrease in the amount of drainage with discomfort at the catheter site
- Blood in or around your catheter
- Fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 Celsius) or higher with or without chills
- Continued blood in the urine
- Nausea and vomiting
- Chills
- Urine that is cloudy or has a strong odor
- Back pain
- Catheter becomes dislodged or broken
- Catheter begins to leak

If you need to talk to a doctor **in the evening or on a weekend, call 614-293-8000**. Ask the operator to page the Interventional Radiology resident on call.

It is important to keep your appointments to have your nephrostomy catheter changed. In most cases, the catheter will be changed every 2 to 3 months. To schedule an appointment for a catheter change, call Interventional Radiology at (614) 293-2773.