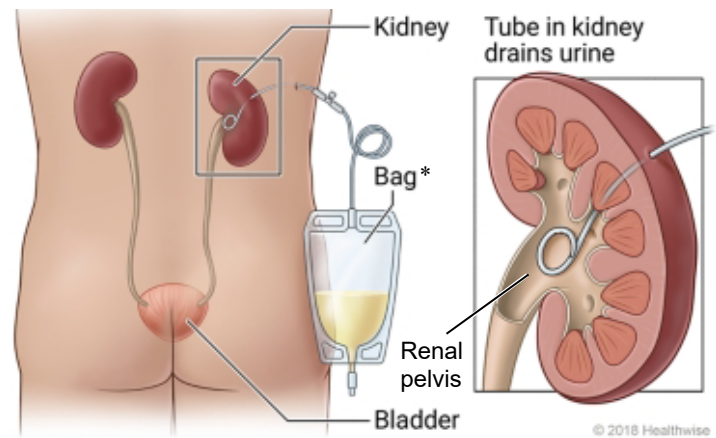


Flushing Your Nephrostomy Catheter

A nephrostomy catheter is a thin tube placed into your kidney to drain urine. The urine collects in a bag attached to the tube. In most cases, the bag is attached to your leg. Sometimes the catheter tube has a valve that lets you drain the urine into the toilet or other container.



Flushing the tube may be done to keep it from getting clogged.

Not all patients need their tube(s) flushed. It is often done when it is newly placed until the drainage is clear. Do not try to flush your nephrostomy tube unless instructed to by your doctor.

Cautions

- The end of the catheter is placed in the renal pelvis of your kidney. The renal pelvis holds 5 to 10 ML (milliliters) of fluid.
- Only 5 ML of saline is used to flush the catheter. If you feel any pressure as you put the fluid in, stop.
- Never use the syringe to pull fluid out of the tube because it could damage the kidney.

Gather your supplies

- Prefilled saline syringe (these come in 10ML) of 5 ml sterile 0.9% saline (NaCl)
- Alcohol pad or cotton balls soaked with rubbing alcohol
- Non-sterile gloves
- Clean towel

Follow these steps

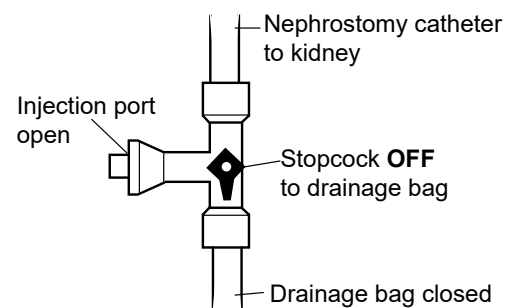
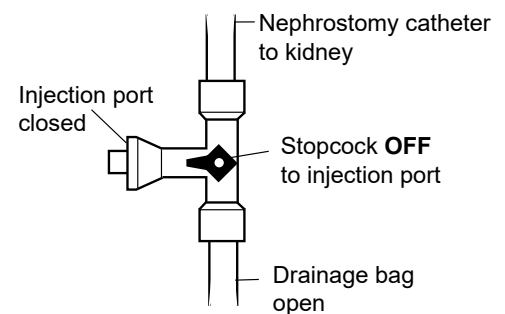
1. Place your supplies on a table that has been washed with soap and water and dried with a clean towel.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Rinse and towel dry.
3. Put on non-sterile gloves.

If your catheter does not have a stopcock:

1. Take the saline syringe out of the wrapper.
2. Place a towel under the catheter connection before disconnecting the catheter from the drainage bag. Place the end of the drainage bag on the towel.
3. Clean the end of the catheter with an alcohol pad.
4. Pick up the syringe and remove the cap. Hold the syringe up so the air bubble is at the top of the syringe. Push the plunger up to push the air bubble out of the syringe. Then attach the saline syringe to the end of the catheter.
5. Gently push on the plunger to flush no more than 5 ML of saline into the catheter. Stop if you feel any pressure and do not pull back on the plunger.
6. Set down the syringe on the catheter and pick up the end of the drainage bag.
7. Clean the end of the drainage bag with an alcohol wipe. Then pick up the catheter end and remove the syringe.
8. Connect the catheter back to the end of the drainage bag.
9. Throw away the syringe in the trash. Remove your gloves. Wash and dry your hands.

If your catheter has a stopcock:

1. Check that the stopcock is “off” to the injection port.
2. Clean the injection cap on the stopcock with alcohol.
3. Take the syringe out of the wrapper. Remove the cap on the end of the syringe. Hold the syringe straight up so the air bubble is up in top of the syringe and gently push until the bubble is out of the syringe.
4. Put the saline syringe into the injection cap of the stopcock.
5. Turn the stopcock off to the drainage bag (closed). The stopcock flange faces the bag. This opens the injection port.
6. Gently push on the syringe plunger to put in 5 ML of saline. Do not force in the saline or pull back on the plunger.
7. Turn the stopcock off to the injection port, allowing the flow of urine into the bag.
8. Remove the syringe from the injection cap on the stopcock.
9. Throw away the syringe in the trash. Remove your gloves. Wash and dry your hands.



Questions or concerns

If you have questions or concerns about caring for your catheter, please call Interventional Radiology at 614-293-2773. For evenings or weekends, call 614-293-8000. Ask the operator to page the Interventional Radiology resident on call.