

# What You Should Know

- A catheter is a tube which drains urine from the bladder to a bag outside the body
- When is a catheter needed?**  
(Your doctor should explain this to you and/or your family)
- Some patients having surgery must be measured often
  - Patients in critical condition where fluids and urine cannot move
  - Patients with injuries who cannot move
  - Patients with a blockage that prevents urination
  - Patients with a bedsore that may get wet from urine
- What are my other options?**
- Use of a bedside commode
  - Use of absorbent pads
  - Use of other devices to collect urine
  - Ask your doctor about options other than the catheter

- Having a catheter can have risks. A catheter can:**
- Be uncomfortable or hurt
  - Decrease your ability to move about and get stronger; the less you move, the higher your risk for pressure sores
  - Increase your chance of tripping or falling
  - Cause injury if it is accidentally pulled out
  - Increase your chance of an infection; the longer a catheter is in place, the greater the risk.
- Possible symptoms of an infection include:**
- Fever
  - Pain or burning in your abdomen or back
  - Confusion or decreased alertness, especially for elderly people

## Your Care Counts

Get Engaged: You and Your Family Have a Role in Preventing Infection

We care about you and your safety. Your understanding of catheters will improve your comfort, safety, and satisfaction following insertion of your catheter. Catheter-associated urinary tract infections are the most common type of infection you can get in the hospital. These infections can decrease your ability to move, increase your chances of a fall, and may lead to complications or death. Ask your care team (doctors, nurses, assistants, rehab) the questions in this brochure every day. Use the chart on the other side of this sheet to write down what they say, and when it is full ask for another!



THESE INFECTIONS ARE UP TO **70%** PREVENTABLE



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## What You Need To Do:

1. Ask these questions daily — your chance of infection grows each day.
2. Ask the care team to provide a business card or write their names on the care board.

Dates	Can my catheter be removed today?	If no, why do I need my catheter today?	Who helped you answer these questions?
	(Circle one) YES NO		
	(Circle one) YES NO		
	(Circle one) YES NO		

## What can your care team do?

Before you have a catheter, your care team should:

- Tell you how long you can expect to have your catheter
- Explain why you need a catheter
- Explain the risks of a catheter

While your catheter is being inserted, your care team should:

- Always wash their hands before caring for you
- Use a germ-free method to put the catheter in
- Keep the catheter area clean
- Empty the drainage bag, especially if you are moved from place to place
- Keep the drainage bag hanging lower than your hip area (but not on the floor)

Remove the catheter as soon as it is no longer needed

If you have any concerns or need another form, please ask your care team.  
Thank you for taking an active role in preventing infection!