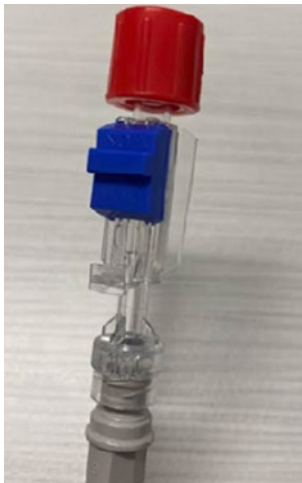


Tunneled Peritoneal Catheter

Introduction

You have a tunneled peritoneal catheter to remove fluid from your abdomen. This fluid, called ascites, can cause bloating and breathing problems. This document will show you how to care for your catheter at home.

A catheter is a thin, flexible tube. There will be a surgical stitch around the catheter securing it to your skin. The end of the catheter will have a flow switch that you can turn on or off. It will have a red cap.



Tunneled Peritoneal Catheter

We will cover the catheter with a dressing when you go home. You will need to drain fluid through the catheter and change the dressing.

Care of the Catheter

Keep the site clean and dry.

Do not shower for at least 48 hours after we place the catheter. Each time you shower, cover the catheter to protect it from getting wet. You may tape a plastic bag around the dressing site while showering. Do not take a tub bath or swim while you have the catheter.

How to Drain the Fluid

Your care team will give you a schedule of when to drain the fluid. Be sure to keep everything clean to prevent infection. You will need to measure and record how much fluid you drain. This is best done sitting at a table.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel.
2. Gather your supplies:
 - Sterile cap (Red cap). The Red cap contains 70% isopropyl alcohol and goes on the end of the catheter to keep it disinfected and maintain a closed system.
 - Gloves (optional)
 - Two alcohol swabs
 - Measuring cup
 - Pen or pencil
 - Log sheet
3. Place a stool next to the chair where you will sit. The stool should be low enough that the cup can rest below your abdomen. Place the cup on the stool and then sit in the chair.
4. Prepare your supplies. Open the two alcohol swabs and the package with the new Red cap. Put on the gloves.
5. Lift up your catheter and check to make sure the flow switch is in the off position. Twist off and discard the red cap.
6. Using one of the alcohol swabs, clean the exposed end of the flow switch.
7. Hold the end over the measuring cup. Do not let the end of the flow switch touch the sides.
8. Slide the flow switch by pushing it away from the catheter to turn it ON (See Figure 1). You will hear a click when it is open. The fluid will flow into the cup.

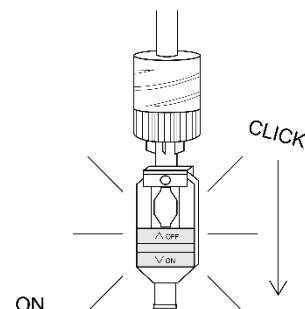


Figure 1

9. After you finish draining the fluid, slide the flow switch OFF by pushing it back toward your body (See Figure 2). Never drain more than your doctor told you without speaking to your doctor first. Draining too much can make you sick. Clean the end of the flow switch with the second alcohol swab. Twist the new Red cap on the end of the flow switch.

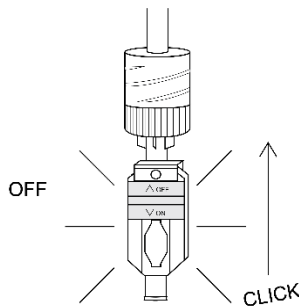


Figure 2

10. Write down the amount of fluid in the measuring cup. You may flush the fluid in the toilet.
11. Remove and discard the gloves. Wash your hands or clean them with an alcohol-based hand gel. Clean the measuring cup with antibacterial dish soap. Allow to air-dry.

How to Change the Dressing

Change the dressing once a week or when it becomes soiled or wet. When changing the dressing and cleaning the area, take care not to pull or push on the catheter.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Gather the equipment you will need.
 - Mild soap mixed in water
 - 2 pairs of gloves
 - Alcohol swabs
 - Several gauze pads
 - Tape
3. Wash your hands again and put on a pair of gloves.
4. Gently remove the dressing. Hold the catheter to avoid pulling on it. Throw away the old dressing.
5. Remove gloves and wash your hands again. Put on a new pair of gloves.
6. Hold the catheter firmly. Clean the exit site and the skin around it with a gauze pad dampened with

soapy water. To clean the catheter, hold the catheter, and wrap moist gauze around it. To prevent pulling, keep holding it while sliding the gauze down the length of the catheter away from the body. Use damp gauze to remove the soap from the exit site and catheter. Then dry the area with fresh gauze.

7. Check the exit site for:
 - Redness
 - Foul smells
 - Leaks in the area

If you have any of these signs of infection or think the catheter may be out of place, call Interventional Radiology (801-581-2967).

8. Place gauze over the catheter site. One should go right over the exit site. Place a second gauze pad half of an inch down to allow the tape to secure the catheter. Tape both gauze pads firmly to hold them in place.
9. Throw away your gloves and wash your hands.

Problem Solving

You may have some problems with your catheter. Below are some tips to help solve these problems yourself. Always feel free to contact us at 801-581-2967 for help.

Problem: There is no fluid coming out when draining.

What to do: Check to see if you removed the cap on the flow switch. Check the flow switch to make sure it is firmly clicked in the “ON” position. Change position. Tilt from side to side. Check for kinks in the catheter. If these steps do not resolve the problem, call the nurse in Interventional Radiology.

Problem: Dressing gets soaked at the catheter exit site.

What to do: Be sure to cover your catheter when showering. If your dressing gets wet during showering, change the dressing immediately afterward. If the dressing gets wet throughout the day or you notice leaks at the exit site, call the nurse in Interventional Radiology (801-581-2967).

When to Call for Help

Call your primary oncologist or oncology nurse if you:

- Feel lightheaded or dizzy.
- Have a temperature greater than 100.3°F (38°C).
- You have much less or much more drainage than you normally have.
- The fluid looks different than usual.
- The drainage is bloody, cloudy, or has an odor.