

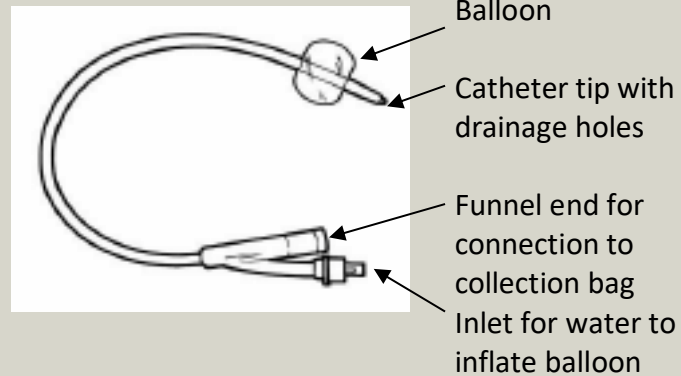
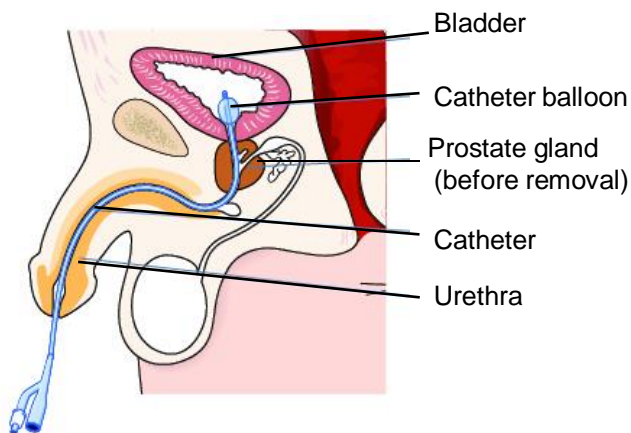


BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT CATHETERS

WHAT IS A CATHETER?

A catheter is a thin tube that is passed into the bladder through the urethra. It may be inserted before or during your prostate surgery.

It stays in place with a small balloon. There are no stitches holding it in place.

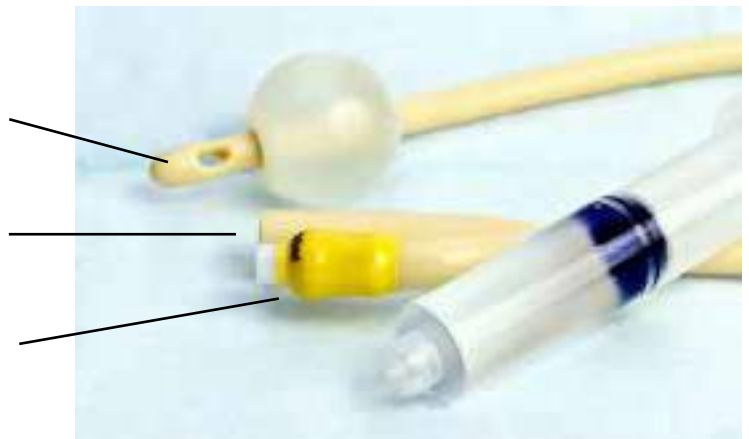


After it is inserted, a small balloon near the inside end of the catheter is inflated with sterile water. The balloon prevents the catheter from slipping back out.

Small holes at the end of the catheter allow urine to drain freely from your bladder through the tube.

The other end of the catheter is connected to a bag, which collects the urine.

When it is time to remove your catheter, the balloon will be deflated so that the catheter can be taken out comfortably.



WHY DO I NEED A CATHETER?

Normally urine is prevented from leaving the bladder by muscles around the bladder 'neck' or exit. When you empty your bladder, these muscles relax and urine flows through the urethra - the narrow passage that ends at the tip of your penis.

The urethra passes through the prostate gland. The prostate and part of the urethra are removed during surgery. The muscles and nerves that control urination may also be affected by the surgery.

After your operation, the catheter drains urine for you. It allows the area where the prostate was and the nerves and muscles to heal.

HOW LONG WILL I HAVE A CATHETER?

Most men will have a catheter for between one and three weeks. Some men may have one for longer. You will be given an appointment to have it removed.

IS A CATHETER UNCOMFORTABLE?

Having a catheter can be uncomfortable at first.

Usually men become used to it quite quickly. It might become uncomfortable if it isn't supported properly. Ask your healthcare professional about getting a catheter retainer strap to hold the catheter tube in place on your thigh.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CATHETERS

Read the leaflet called *Caring for your catheter* and *Collection bags*

www.prostatecontinence.org

www.continenceproductadvisor.org