



# Your Catheter Valve

## What is a Catheter Valve?

A Catheter Valve (pictured opposite) is a tap like device which fits into the end of your catheter (urethral or supra-pubic) and is an alternative to a drainage bag. It allows your bladder to continue to store urine and is emptied by releasing the valve.

**Note.** Catheter Valves are not suitable for everyone with a catheter. Your Nurse will be able to discuss with you if it is suitable for you.

The benefits of a catheter valve are:

- it is more discreet than a leg bag.
- it may reduce the risk of infection and blockage by allowing the intermittent flushing of urine.
- it helps to maintain your bladder function as it allows your bladder to fill and empty.
- if the plan is to remove your catheter, using a valve may help you regain your bladder control.



## When should I open my catheter valve?

- When you feel you need to pass urine.
- Before going to bed at night.
- If you wake at night and you need to pass urine.
- First thing in the morning.
- Prior to opening your bowels (this reduces leakage around the catheter). With a fluid intake of 1½ - 2 litres (3 - 4 pints) during the day you should release your catheter valve at least every four hours. If you drink extra fluids or are on diuretic medication you will need to release the valve more often.

## How do I support my catheter valve?

- It is very important to make sure the catheter valve is always supported so that it does not get trapped or pulled.
- You can use a catheter support strap, or you can support your catheter valve, by tucking it into your underwear.
- You do not need to keep the catheter valve lower than your bladder when it is not being emptied.

## How and when to change your catheter valve

- Change the valve every seven days.
- Wash and dry your hands.
- Empty your bladder by opening the valve.
- Pinch the end of the catheter using thumb and index finger and remove the old valve.

- Open a new valve and connect the new valve avoiding touching the connecting end.
- Check that the valve is closed.

### Can catheter valves be used with drainage bags?

Yes, you can attach leg bags or 2 litre night drainage bags to the catheter valve - but you must remember to leave the tap open to enable the urine to drain.

Some people use catheter valves in the day and also at night. If you produce a lot of urine at night it may be better to attach a 2 litre night drainage bag to the end of the catheter valve and use the bag over night. Some people use a combination of a valve and a leg bag.

Your Nurse will advise you.

### Disposal of valves

#### Disposal at home

Place the old valve into a plastic bag and then into the dustbin. Do not burn on open fire.

#### Disposal in hospital or care homes

Dispose of in clinical waste.

### Drinks

To ensure your catheter drains well you should drink at least 7-8 glasses or 1½ - 2 litres every day. Water and fruit juice are better than tea or coffee.

### Hygiene is very important

- Wash skin daily in the area where the catheter enters your body using mild soap and warm water or have a bath/shower.
- You can bath or shower with a catheter valve in place.
- Women should always wash from front to back.
- Men should wash carefully under their foreskin.

### Problems with your catheter valve

No urine draining when catheter valve is opened or leakage of urine around the catheter (by-passing), check:

- your catheter is not trapped.
- you are not constipated.
- the catheter has not been pulled.
- by opening the valve again to drain your bladder.

If you have any concerns relating to this please contact your nurse for advice.

Further useful information can be found at: [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot)

### Further help and information

If you are experiencing continence issues, contact your GP or Community Nurse.

### We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website: [www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback) or share your story at: [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk) or tel. 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 708069 Monday-Friday between 9am-5.30pm.

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