

These are examples of things that can go wrong with your catheter and how to fix or avoid them.

If urine is not emptying into the leg bag or it is leaking around your catheter:

- Check the connection between the leg bag and your catheter. If not connected to the leg bag properly, try pushing the leg bag tube firmly into your catheter.
- If the leg bag is more than half full of urine empty it.
- If the catheter or leg bag tube is folded or clamped straighten the tubing or unclamp it. Check that the urine is then draining.
- Check that your catheter and the leg bag are in the right position below the abdomen (tummy). If not, change the position. Check that your catheter and leg bag are strapped to the thigh.
- Check that the leg bag straps are behind the leg bag, so that they do not stop the urine flowing.
- If your bowel motions are hard, difficult to pass or runny. Call your doctor or nurse to discuss how to sort it out.



If the urine is discoloured or smelly:

- Drink more liquids. Everyday drink 2-3 litres of liquids to keep the urine flowing through your catheter.
- Contact the nurse or your doctor if you have a fever, chills, pain or tenderness in your lower back, or are feeling confused.

How can I avoid other problems?

- Tightness or pulling on your catheter can cause pain and bladder problems. Make sure that the catheter is always strapped to your thigh. Allow enough length between the strap and where the catheter enters your body so that it is not too tight or pulling.
- Eat fruit and vegetables and have enough fluid to help prevent constipation (hard poos) as this can put pressure on the bladder and cause problems.
- Caffeine (tea / coffee / cola drinks / chocolate) and alcohol should be taken in small amounts as they can cause bladder problems.

If problems continue contact your nurse or doctor to discuss.

How can we help?

There are six Me and My Catheter self-care sheets available.

- Sheet 1 - What is a catheter and why do I have one?
- Sheet 2 - How do I care for my catheter and bags?
- Sheet 3 - How do I change a leg bag and connect the night bag?
- Sheet 4 - How can I avoid infections?
- Sheet 5 - What do I do if something goes wrong?
- Sheet 6 - How can I get more equipment?

If you have any questions or would like to find out about other self-care options, you can contact Bolton Clarke, the National Continence Helpline or your trusted health professional.

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National Continence Helpline 1800 33 00 66.

Free telephone service, provided by the Continence Foundation of Australia, that offers confidential information, advice and support.

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