

Both the leg bag and night bag should be used for one week only.

Changing my leg bag:

Plan:

- You will be told and shown how to look after your leg bag.
- Read the instructions on how to do your care so you are sure of the steps.
- Make sure you have enough equipment and order more before you run out. Ask the nurse if you need help.
- Find a safe, private place to change your bag which gives you:
 - Light to see what you are doing.
 - A clean and warm space, where you don't have to twist, bend, or reach too far.
- Wash your hands before preparing your equipment.

Prepare:

- Wipe down the area you are placing your equipment on with warm water and detergent or a disinfectant wipe.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry with a clean towel.
- Gather all of the equipment first so that you are prepared.
- Your nurse will tell you what equipment you will need from this list:
 - Alcohol swab or cotton ball and methylated spirits
 - New leg bag in sealed packaging
 - Container or jug (kept for emptying urine into)
 - Gloves
 - Scissors
 - Tissues or toilet paper
 - Towel or protection for clothing/bed
 - Rubbish bag



Step 1 - Wash your hands again with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry with a clean towel.

- If another person helps you change your leg bag they should wear gloves.

Step 2 - Before changing the leg bag, empty any urine from the leg bag into the toilet, container, or jug by:

- loosening the straps holding leg bag against your leg
- holding the leg bag over the toilet, container or jug and open the drainage tap or clamp to allow urine to drain out
- do not squeeze the leg bag to speed up the flow of urine when emptying
- when empty, close the tap or clamp dry the tap or clamp with tissue or toilet paper and put in the rubbish.

If using a container or jug, empty the urine into the toilet and flush, then wash out with water and detergent.

Step 3 - When you are ready to change the leg bag remove or rearrange your clothing to help you reach the urinary catheter and the leg bag.

Step 4 - Wash your hands again with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry with a clean towel.

Step 5 - Open the leg bag packet. Make sure the packet is new and has not been opened. Leave the leg bag resting on the inside of the plastic side of the packet.



Step 6 - Close the drainage tap or clamp at the bottom of the new leg bag. Some bags may not have the clamp or tap closed.



Step 7 - You may need to cut the leg bag tubing to a length more comfortable to wear.

Step 8 - Cut the tubing with scissors cleaned with an alcohol swab or cotton ball and methylated spirits.

Step 9 - Then insert the extra connector (found inside the packet) into the end of the tubing.

Step 10 - Gently loosen the leg bag connector cap, but do not remove it.

Step 11 - Loosen or remove your catheter from catheter strap. Take care not to pull on your catheter.

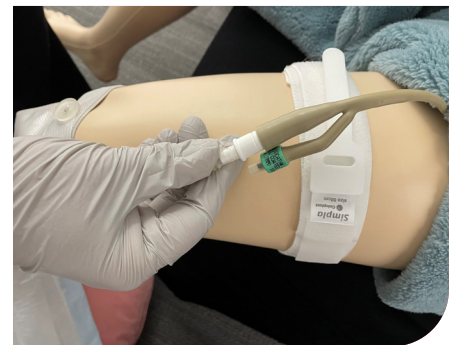
Step 12 - Clean the join between your catheter and the leg bag by wiping, in one direction, with an alcohol swab or cotton ball and methylated spirits.

Allow to dry.

Step 13 - Pinch, using your fingers, your catheter closed by using one hand to gently squeeze or fold the catheter to stop urine leaking out.

Do not pinch with anything stronger than your fingers as this may damage your catheter.

Step 14 - With the other hand, gently massage your catheter and the leg bag apart where they connect. Do not pull apart with force as this may flick urine about. Put the used leg bag into the rubbish.



Step 15 - Pick up the new leg bag. Remove the cap on the leg bag connector without touching the end.

Step 16 - Push the leg bag connector into the end of your catheter without touching the ends with your fingers.

PUSH TOGETHER FIRMLY.

Step 17 - Gently check that the connection is secure.

Step 18 - Unclamp your catheter to allow urine to flow through the tubing into the leg bag.

Step 19 - Attach your catheter to your thigh or lower stomach with a catheter strap. Allow enough length so that your catheter is not too tight or pulling. You should be able to twist and bend without pulling or pain.

Step 20 - Attach the leg bag to your leg with the two provided leg bag straps or a leg bag sleeve if used.

- Ensure that the leg bag does not slip down when you move.



Connecting and disconnecting the night bag

Step 1 - Each night connect a night bag to the end of the leg bag. Make sure the leg bag clamp or tap is open to let the urine empty into the night bag.

Step 2 - Each morning close the leg bag tap or clamp and remove the night bag.

Step 3 - Empty the urine from the night bag into the toilet. Wash the night bag with water and detergent, rinse well with water.

Step 4 - Hang the night bag to dry. A good place to do this is in your shower. Make sure that the tap or clamp is open.



Every week a new leg bag and night bag should be used to avoid infection.



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.

 hello@boltonclarke.com.au

 www.boltonclarke.com.au

 1300 22 11 22

 **National Continence Helpline 1800 33 00 66.**

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

This resource was developed in partnership with the Continence Foundation of Australia

