

Urinary Drainage Bags: Home Living, Supportive Living, Long-term Care Information Sheet

Note: This Information Sheet was developed to provide IPC guidance on the cleaning of urinary drainage bags in Home Living, Supportive Living and Long-term Care. **This information does not apply to Acute Care.**

If you have any questions or comments regarding this Information Sheet contact Infection Prevention & Control at infectionpreventioncontrol@ahs.ca.

Purpose

This resource is intended to provide general instruction to clients and healthcare providers for the cleaning of urinary drainage bags in Continuing Care Home Living, Supportive Living, and Long-term Care settings. It does not provide client specific information or replace prescriber's orders. The exception to the *Standards for Single-Use Medical Devices: As Applied to Critical and Semi-Critical Medical Devices* is for **urinary drainage bags** only and applies to re-use by the same client; it is not intended for re-use between clients.

Key points

When a closed system is maintained, the urinary drainage bag is only changed when the catheter is changed (i.e., every 29 days or sooner). Do not routinely disconnect the drainage bag to clean it. Replace the urinary drainage bag if the bag is leaking, damaged or contents are unable to be seen clearly due to sediment or discoloration.

Urinary drainage bags must be discarded every seven (7) days from first use when:

- switching from a leg bag to a large drainage bag;
- disconnecting the drainage bag from the catheter; and
- the bag is leaking, damaged, discolored, stiff and brittle or a strong odor persists after cleaning.

Before reconnecting a urinary drainage bag to an indwelling urinary catheter, clean the ends with an alcohol or chlorhexidine swab. Wash any reusable items used (e.g., squeeze bottle, measuring cup) with hot soapy water after every use. Rinse and allow to air dry. Replace items if damaged, discolored, or they become hard, brittle, or soft.

Cleaning urinary drainage bags

Before starting, ensure there are extra supplies and equipment to allow for drying time of the drainage bags.

1. Clean and disinfect the work area (e.g., counter) using an approved AHS disinfectant.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
3. Collect the required equipment and supplies:
 - a few drops of clear liquid soap (e.g., general use dish soap) in 1 cup/250 mL of water;
 - acetic acid solution of 1:1 vinegar to water (e.g., 1 cup/250 mL vinegar to 1 cup/250 mL water);
 - a clean 60 mL catheter tip syringe or squeeze bottle;
 - clean or disposable towel for the workspace;
 - clean, non-sterile gloves;
 - alcohol or chlorhexidine swabs; and
 - clean or new urinary drainage bag.
4. Don clean, non-sterile gloves.

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5. Disconnect the existing urinary drainage bag from the indwelling catheter, swab the ends with alcohol or chlorhexidine, and connect the clean or new urinary drainage bag.
6. Empty the disconnected urinary drainage bag.
7. Add soapy water into the catheter bag using the catheter tip syringe or squeeze bottle.
8. Gently shake and rub the sides of the bag to loosen any deposits. Ensure all areas of the bag are clean, including the drainage spout and tubing. Inspect for damage or leaks during cleaning; discard the bag if necessary.
9. Drain the soapy water through the drainage spout and tubing. Flush the bag with cool tap water, until the water runs clear through tubing and spout. Inspect to make sure there is no soap residue present in the bag, drainage spout or tubing.
10. Rinse the bag with acetic acid solution (1:1 vinegar and water) using the 60 mL syringe or squeeze bottle. Shake the solution in the drainage bag and allow to sit for 15 minutes. Rinse thoroughly with cool tap water and allow to dry.
11. Allow the drainage bag, spout and tubing to dry on a clean, dry surface, open to air after cleaning. Ensure the open spout, or connector tubing do not touch any surfaces.
12. Remove and discard gloves; wash hands with soap and water.
13. Document according to established process.

Client education

- Refer to [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](https://myhealth.alberta.ca) for consumer health and wellness resources.
- Learning About Urinary Catheter Care to Prevent Infection: <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/AfterCareInformation/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwld=ut2057>

References

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