

Caring for Myself after a Neobladder Surgery

What can I expect after the surgery?

- You will be discharged from the hospital with a catheter in your urethra. This catheter drains urine from the neobladder into a collection bag. This allows the neobladder to heal over a 2 week period.
- Your neobladder is made using intestine. Because the cells lining the intestines produce mucus, you will notice mucus draining out with your urine.
- You will not have the same sensation of a full bladder as you did previously. You will learn to recognize a feeling of fullness or pressure in the abdominal area that will signal that your neobladder is full.

What are my activity instructions?

Driving:

- Do not drive until you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications.
- Do not drive until after your catheter is removed.

Physical Activity:

- Continue walking when you return home, gradually increasing the distance you walk. This will help you build strength.
- Avoid heavy lifting (greater than 10 pounds) for about 4 weeks.
- Stay active, but avoid strenuous activity for about 4 weeks.

Hygiene:

- Keep your incisions clean, dry, and open to air.
- Gently wash your incision with unscented antibacterial soap when bathing.

- Men: place a small amount of antibiotic ointment around the urethral opening while the catheter is in place.

Diet:

- Drink at least 8 (eight) 8-ounce glasses of fluid a day (a total of 64 ounces). It is important to drink plenty of fluids to dilute the mucus in your urine.

How will I care for the neobladder?

The intestine that makes up the neobladder produces mucus. Mucus build-up might lead to an inability to pass urine from the neobladder, infection or problems with the neobladder healing. To prevent mucus build-up, your catheter and neobladder will require regular irrigation.

Take these steps to make sure mucus does not obstruct your catheter or neobladder:

- Drink plenty of liquids to increase urine output and the natural flow of mucus out of the neobladder.
- Irrigate your catheter.

What is irrigation?

Irrigation refers to gently pushing sterile water into the catheter and neobladder, then gently pulling out the fluid along with mucus and urine.

- Irrigate your neobladder 3 (three) times per day (more often if needed) with sterile water. Do not use tap water.

Signs that your catheter needs additional irrigation:

- If you experience leakage around the catheter. This is a sign that mucus might be plugging the catheter.
- If you notice a decrease in urine output, urine that is tea-colored, or if you see mucus in the tubing.
- If you develop pelvic discomfort or cramps and the catheter is not draining freely.

Refer to the *Patient and Treatment Handbook Neobladder* for more directions on irrigating your catheter and instruction on caring for the urine drainage system.

When should I call the surgeon's office?

- If your catheter is dislodged.
- If your catheter has a blockage that does not respond to gentle irrigation.
- If you have poor oral intake, cannot hydrate according to recommendations or you are vomiting.

What is the number to call?

- During business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm call: (734) 647-8903
- After business hours, on weekends and holidays call the University of Michigan Health 936-4000 and ask to speak with the urology resident on call.

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