The background of the entire page is a photograph of a young girl with curly hair sitting in a wheelchair. A female teacher with long dark hair is leaning over her, smiling and looking at a book or paper. Other students are visible in the background, slightly out of focus. The scene is set in a classroom with a world map on the wall.

PATIENT GUIDE

Leg Bag and Drain Bag

Convenient, Easy, Comfortable Catheterization

Step-by-Step

PATIENT GUIDE

Leg and Drain Bag

Contents

- 3 Frequently Asked Questions
- 4 Using Your Leg Bag
- 6 Using Your Drain Bag
- 7 Emptying Your Drain Bag
- 8 Switching Your Drain Bag
- 9 Cleaning Your Drain Bag

The information herein is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice or to be relied on instead of such advice. Please consult your healthcare provider to determine the appropriate course of treatment in any situation involving catheters and catheterizations.

Frequently Asked Questions

Leg bags and drain bags are attached to indwelling or external catheters and used for continuous urinary collection. Keep in mind that catheters and drain bags work with gravity, so make sure the bag is always lower than your bladder.

When should I use a leg bag vs. a drain bag?	You can use a drain bag either during the night only or throughout the entire day and night. A leg bag can be worn during the day, but you will need to switch to a drain bag for overnight use.
Does a leg bag require extension tubing?	In most cases, you will find that a tubing extension is essential for comfort and proper placement of the leg bag. The leg bag can be positioned either on the thigh or on the calf. You can cut the extension tubing to the length that is best for you, and then attach to the leg bag.
How do I know what size leg bag to choose?	Your leg bag size will depend on personal preference, how much fluid intake and output you have, and how often you can empty the bag. Some people prefer a smaller bag because it is more discreet; others prefer a larger bag because it has a larger capacity. Whichever leg bag you select, you should empty it when it gets about half full.
Where should I position the leg bag?	Again, this will depend on your personal preference: » Thigh – While placement on the thigh can provide more discretion, some people find the bag straps are more difficult to keep in place when the leg bag is on the thigh. » Calf – Placement on the calf can be more secure, but it requires longer extension tubing, which can sometimes get in the way.
Where should I position the drain bag for overnight use?	Place the bag below the bladder level, ensuring that it does not lie on the floor. Leave enough slack in the tubing to allow some freedom of movement so that the bag does not tug on the catheter.
Do I always need to use a securement device?	Yes, either use an adhesive securement or a leg strap to secure the Foley catheter at all times. This helps improve your comfort and helps prevent UTI's.

Equipment You'll Need

- Soap and Water
- Extension tubing
- Pre-soaked alcohol pad or isopropyl alcohol and gauze or cloth.
- Leg bag or drain bag
- Scissors

Leg Bag

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1

Wash hands with soap and water.

Step 2

Position the bag where it is most comfortable. The protective cap should be closest you, and the outlet valve away from you. Wrap the top strap around the leg and secure, and then do the same with the bottom strap.

- » Be careful – do NOT secure the straps too tightly, or they may be uncomfortable, cause sores or clots, or not allow good circulation.

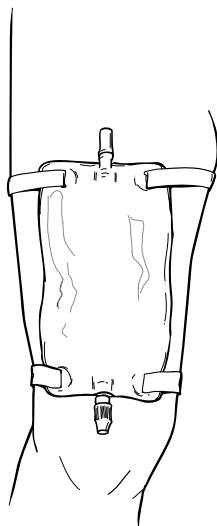
Step 3

Estimate the length of extension tubing needed:

- » With the hard plastic connector end facing toward you and the catheter, put the tube in the approximate position it is to be connected.
- » Make sure the tubing is short enough to prevent kinking but long enough to prevent pull on catheter.

Step 4

Using isopropyl alcohol, clean your scissors. Then, cut the tubing at the end without the hard plastic connector.



Leg Bag

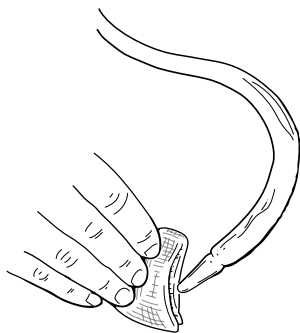
Step-by-Step Instructions Continued

Step 5

Remove the protective cap from the leg bag connector.
Check the drainage spout at the bottom to make sure it is closed.

Step 6

With an alcohol-saturated pad or material, clean the cut end of the tubing and the top connector on the leg bag.
Attach the tubing to the leg bag connector.



Step 7

With another alcohol-saturated pad or material, clean the connector end of the tubing and the end of the catheter.
Attach the catheter to the tubing connector.

Step 8

Adjust straps or bag position as needed.

Step 9

Discard any packaging, alcohol pads, etc.

Step 10

Wash your hands with soap and water.



Drain Bag (Overnight Bag)

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1

Wash hands with soap and water.

Step 2

Remove protective cap from the drain bag.
Check the drainage spout to make sure it is closed.

Step 3

With an alcohol-saturated pad or material, clean the connector end of the tubing, and the end of the catheter.
Attach the catheter to the drain bag tubing connector.



Step 4

Discard any packaging, alcohol pads, etc.

Step 5

Wash your hands with soap and water.



Emptying Your Bag

Step-by-Step Instructions

Empty your bag frequently, not allowing it to become more than approximately half full. Remember, as it fills up, it gets heavier and may tug on the catheter or become difficult to manage.

Step 1

Wash hands with soap and water.



Step 2

Keep the bag below your bladder as you empty it.

Step 3

Hold the bag over the toilet or container.

Open the drainage spout and empty the urine from the bag.

- » Do not let the bag touch the rim of the toilet or container. With an alcohol-saturated pad or material, clean the drainage spout and close it tightly.



Step 4

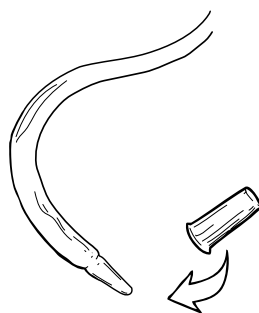
Wash your hands with soap and water.

Switching Your Drain and Leg Bag

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1

You may want to use a catheter plug (for a Foley catheter) to keep the catheter from draining when changing the bags. Or you can place a towel underneath the catheter to collect any drips.



Step 2

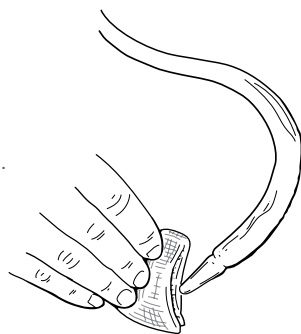
When your leg bag or drain bag is not being used, cover the connector with its original plastic protective cap.

Step 3

When attaching the catheter to either the leg bag or drain bag, always clean the connector and the catheter with alcohol.

Step 4

CLEAN your drain bag each morning as soon as possible once it is removed. **CLEAN** your leg bag each night as soon as possible once it is removed.



Cleaning Your Drain and Leg Bag

Step-by-Step Instructions

Mix cleaning solution:

Either: 2 parts white vinegar and 3 parts water

Or: 1 tablespoon chlorine bleach and 1/2 cup water

Step 1

Empty the bag of urine, and then close the drainage spout.

Step 2

Place tubing under the faucet, putting warm water into the bag.

Step 3

Swish it around for 10 seconds, and then empty it through the drainage spout. Close the spout.

Step 4

Pour cleaning solution into the bag. Put the protective cap on the connector.

Step 5

Swish solution around for 30 seconds, and then let it sit in the bag for 20 minutes. Empty through the drainage spout.

Step 6

Keep spout open and pointed down. Hang the bag to dry until switching bags again.

Step 7

Remember to close the spout when attaching it to the catheter.

NOTE: The drain bag and leg bag, when switched daily, should last for approximately one month. Discard and replace bags earlier if they become discolored, brittle or if they smell even after cleaning.



ENHANCE YOUR HEALTH

Online patient resources



Want to learn more? Additional information on caring for yourself are just a few clicks away at medlineuniversity.com.

- 1 Go to the site.
- 2 Click on the Patient Education tab at the top of the page.
- 3 Click on the Care icon.
- 4 Read and download patient care guides on:
 - » Catheter Care
 - » Leg & Drain Bag Catheters
 - » Self-catheterization

Explore the site for more helpful health tips for you and your family.



Medline Industries, Inc. One Medline Place, Mundelein, IL 60060

Medline United States
1-800-MEDLINE (633-5463)
medline.com | info@medline.com

Medline Canada
1-800-396-6996
medline.ca | canada@medline.com

Medline México
01-800-831-0898
medlinemexico.com | mexico@medline.com

FOLLOW US 