

---

## Going Home with a Nephrostomy Tube

---

### Looking after the nephrostomy tube and bag

You will be going home with your nephrostomy tube and collection bag. The bag needs to be kept lower than the tube insertion site to allow proper drainage.

Wash your hands well before and after you handle the drainage bag.

Empty the bag when it is about ½ full to prevent urine backing up into the kidney. The pressure of a full bag can also pull the tube out.

You should wash and rinse the drainage bag once a day.

Follow these steps:

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Wash the bag with clean water.
- Rinse the bag with a solution of 30 ml (1 ounce) of vinegar mixed with 950 ml (1 quart) of water.
- Air dry the bag on a clean towel. Do not dry the inside of the bag.



Use a new drainage bag every 7 days. To attach a bag, follow these steps:

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Using an alcohol wipe, wipe the tips of the bag and the tube.
- Connect the tip of the tube to the bag.

The dressing over the incision needs to be checked and changed. You will not be able to manage this yourself so a visiting nurse will come and change it. A friend or family member can also learn how to look after the dressing and check for infection.

Your dressing needs to be changed and the skin inspected:

- when wet
- at least every 7 days

The tube will be taped to your skin to prevent it from being blocked by a kink or being pulled out by accident.

## Diet

You can eat the same way you did before you came to the hospital. Remember, it is important to drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day if you are allowed. Drinking helps healing and prevents infection.

## Activity

You can slowly return to your normal activities when you go home. Walking is a good activity to begin with. You should avoid strenuous activities. Some examples of strenuous activities are shovelling snow, raking leaves, mowing the lawn, vacuuming, doing laundry or hanging clothes.

Avoid lifting things greater than 10 pounds or 4 kilograms. Some examples are a full grocery bag, suitcase, small child or wet clothes in a laundry basket

Avoid vigorous exercise for 4 to 6 weeks and contact sports for 3 months.

If you have any questions about activities you like to do, ask your doctor.



## Sexual activity

You can return to your normal sexual activity when you feel comfortable.

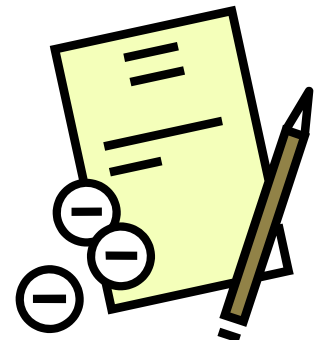


## Return to work

Going back to work depends on the type of work you do and your health. Discuss this with your doctor to plan what is best for you.

## Medications

When you leave the hospital, you may be given prescriptions for medications. This will depend on your needs. Fill the prescriptions at your local pharmacy and start the medications right away. Follow your doctor's orders for taking them.



## Medications

You may need to take:



- Antibiotic medication to help prevent infection. These must be taken until they are all gone.
- Medication to control pain. Take this medication as directed.
- Medication to prevent constipation. Take this as directed.

If the medication contains codeine, you may become constipated. To help prevent constipation, you should eat food high in fibre and drink a lot of water if allowed. If constipation becomes a problem, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or health care provider.

## Prevent infection

**Wash your hands before and after:**

- all dressing changes
- emptying urine bag
- connecting and reconnecting urine bag
- changing urine bag



Drink at least 4 to 6 glasses of water a day unless you have been given other instructions.

**Signs of infection on skin around tube:**

- redness
- swelling
- foul odour
- drainage

**Signs of a urinary tract infection:**

- temperature above 38°C
- pain in the side of your back
- cloudy or foul smelling urine

### **Signs of a blocked tube:**

- sudden decrease in urine
- leaking around nephrostomy tube
- pain in your back

### **Contact your doctor, visiting nurse or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:**

- signs of infection on skin around tube
- signs of a urinary tract infection
- signs of a blocked tube
- blood in the urine drainage
- nausea, vomiting or diarrhea for 2 days or more that is not getting better



### **If the tube falls out or is pulled out, you need a new tube put in:**

- Call the Urologist right away **OR**
- Go to the Emergency Department during off hours.