

Clipping and releasing your catheter using a valve



Information for patients

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals



PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



What is meant by clipping and releasing?

By fitting a valve to the end of your catheter, you can 'clip off' the catheter for a period and allow the bladder to collect and store some urine. At intervals, you can 'open' the valve and allow the urine to drain out before clipping off again.

Why should I clip and release?

It is good practice to maintain some capacity in your bladder. Also, collecting a volume of urine in your bladder and then allowing it to drain helps to wash out any debris.

This reduces the risk of infections and bladder stones.

If you do not maintain the capacity of your bladder, it may eventually shrink. A very small, shrunken bladder can cause problems long term.

How often should I do this?

Ideally, you should clip the catheter off for 4 hours at a time as this loosely mimics the period between emptying your bladder normally. If your catheter has been on free drainage for sometime, your bladder may have shrunk in size and it will take some time to stretch it up again. If this is the case, start clipping off for ½ hour, then increase to hourly, 2 hours, 3 hours, then 4 hours.

Every bladder is different and you will have to try and see how quickly you are able to increase the time intervals. If you are unable to clip off for 4 hours then any amount of time is better than none.

Will I always be able to clip and release my catheter?

If you develop a bladder infection, bladder stones or become constipated, you may find that you cannot clip and release as normal until the problem settles or is dealt with. If you find you are suddenly unable to clip and release without getting wet, allow your catheter to drain freely into a bag and seek advice from your District Nurse or the ward.

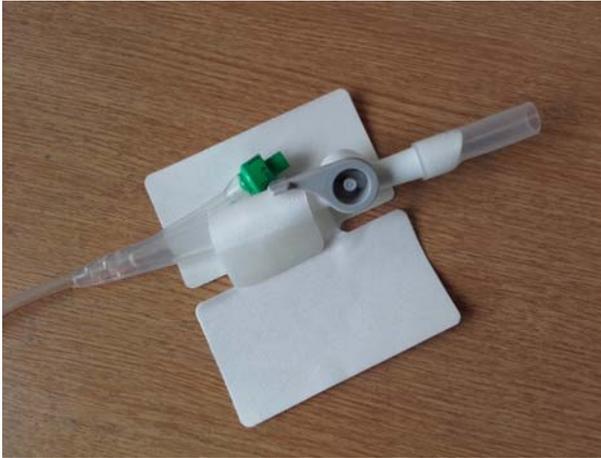
What if I can't clip and release without getting wet?

Not everyone is able to clip and release without getting wet, but it is well worth trying. If you try it and you really are not able to stay dry at all, just try to 'clip off' for one period per day. Do this when you are in the bath or shower and it does not matter if you get wet. Even clipping off for ½ hour will stretch your bladder up a little and help maintain its capacity.

The benefits of clip and release are such that it may be worth taking a 'one a day' tablet of an anticholinergic medicine, such as Oxybutynin. Such medicines aim to relax your bladder and stop you getting wet so easily. This should allow you to clip and release more regularly and for longer periods. If this does not work, or causes troublesome side-effects such as dry mouth or constipation, you can discuss the possibility of having injections of Botulinum Toxin ('Botox') into your bladder (see separate botulinum toxin leaflet for further details).

What type of valve should I get and where do I get it from?

There are a selection of catheter valves available on prescription from your GP, an example of one is shown on the next page. We can supply your catheter valves in the first instance.



Who should I contact if I have any questions or concerns?

Do contact us for advice if you have any questions or problems with the above procedure. We can be contacted as follows:

Ward:

Telephone:

District Nurse:

Alternative formats can be available on request.

Please email: alternativeformats@sth.nhs.uk

© Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust 2019

Re-use of all or any part of this document is governed by copyright and the "Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005" SI 2005 No.1515. Information on re-use can be obtained from the Information Governance Department, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. Email infogov@sth.nhs.uk