



# The British Association of Urological Surgeons

## Catheter valves

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This leaflet gives you simple, easy-to-read details about catheter valves. Expert doctors in the UK have written it. Please also remember the advice your own doctor or nurse has already given you.

### What is a catheter valve?

Some people have a soft tube put into their bladder. The medical team call this a catheter. It helps drain your pee. The pee usually drains into a bag. The bag is attached to the catheter all the time. It needs to be emptied.

Some people who need a catheter can use a valve. It acts like a tap. This means you do not need to wear a bag all the time.

The valve fits onto the end of your catheter. You can open it to let pee out when you feel your bladder is full. It is smaller and more comfortable than a bag. It also helps your bladder fill and empty like it normally would.

Valves are not right for everyone.

- You need to be able to use your hands well.
- You need to be able to think clearly.
- You need to be able to feel when your bladder is full.

You might not be able to use a valve after you have had an operation. Your doctor or nurse will check if a valve is right for you.

You should always check with your medical team before using a catheter valve.

### How should you use the valve?

Your nurse will show you how to open and close the valve. They will also tell you how often to empty your bladder.

This is what to do:

1. Wash your hands well.
2. Hold the catheter tube and valve over the toilet. You can use a clean container if you prefer.
3. Open the valve and let your pee drain out fully.
4. Close the valve with clean tissue.
5. Tuck it back inside your clothes.
6. Wash your hands again.

You can hold your catheter in place with tight clothes. You can also hold it in place with a soft strap on your leg. Your nurse will help you with this.

Do not let the catheter hang loose. It will tug. This can hurt.

If you use a container to collect your pee, wash it with warm soapy water after each use. Store it upside down to keep it clean.

## How to keep the area clean

- Wash the skin around the catheter once or twice a day. Use warm soapy water.
- If you are a man:
  - Gently pull back your foreskin, if you have one.
  - Clean the tip of your penis and the catheter.
  - Then slide your foreskin forward again.
- You can have a bath or shower with the catheter in place.
- Most valves need changing about once a week. Your nurse will teach you how to do this.
- Sometimes you may need to take the valve off. You should wash it well in clean water. Dry it with a clean paper towel.

## What to do if the valve does not work

- Wash your hands.
- Point the end of your catheter over the toilet.
- Take the valve off the end of the catheter.
- If pee starts to come out, the valve may be faulty.
- Put on a new valve if you have one.

If you do not have a spare valve, attach a drainage bag to the catheter. Your nurse will show you how to do this. Use the bag until you get a new valve.

If pee does not come out at all, contact your medical team straight away.

When you get home from hospital, your district nurse will visit you to check everything is working well. They will give you a phone number to call if you have any problems.

### Important tips

- Only use your own valve. Do not share it with anyone else.
- Try to drink at least 2 litres of fluid each day.
- Eat fresh fruit and vegetables to help avoid constipation.

## Important

We have worked hard to make this leaflet clear and correct. But it cannot replace advice from your own doctor or nurse. Always ask them if you are worried or unsure.

## What should you do with this leaflet?

You can keep this leaflet. If you have more questions, ask your doctor or nurse. They can explain more.

### Online access

You can see this leaflet on the internet.

Scan the special picture (QR code).

### Feedback

We'd love to know what you think! You can share your thoughts by emailing us at **admin@baus.org.uk**



**<https://rb.gy/13e39c>**

## Questions and notes

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