

# Changing your Tunneled Catheter Dressing

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The dressing is changed as needed or once a week if you use a clear dressing. If you use gauze or a dry dressing, it is changed every 2 days.

Your nurse will show you how to change your dressing. While you are at home, if you have any questions or concerns please call:

Clinic or hospital nurse \_\_\_\_\_

Home care nurse \_\_\_\_\_

## Helpful tips

- Have your emergency telephone numbers close by.
- Keep a list of your questions, problems or notes in a book or diary.
- Keep a calendar for clinic appointments and follow-up appointments with your nurse.
- Know how and whom to contact for supplies.
- Know how to pay for supplies.

## Important ...

- ✓ Avoid contact sports.
  - ✓ You cannot swim, soak in a tub or hot tub with a Tunneled Catheter.  
**The catheter cannot be under water.**
  - ✓ When showering, cover the line/dressing so it does not get wet. If the dressing gets wet during your bath or shower, remove the dressing and apply a new one.
  - ✓ If not using the catheter it needs to be flushed every week. This can be done by a home care nurse, at the hospital or you can be taught to do it yourself.
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## **When choosing the best place to do your catheter care, keep these things in mind:**

- a sink which is easy to get to
- good lighting
- away from food areas
- away from the main activities of the household, but close enough to call for help if needed
- a place to put all your supplies; a room with shelves or an empty large drawer
- a room that is easy to keep clean and free of dust
- a comfortable spot in the room to sit or lie down
- a safe area away from children and pets
- a place free of drafts away from open windows, heating ducts and fans

## **When doing your catheter care:**

- set aside 20 to 45 minutes
  - limit distractions: such as not answering your phone
  - try to do it at the same time each day: tell your friends and family this time so they do not bother you
  - clean your work area before and after catheter care
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## Supplies

- garbage bag
- dressing
- antiseptic
- clean towel
- gloves
- mask

## Getting ready

1. Wash your hands.
2. Put on mask.
3. Put your supplies on a clean towel.
4. Remove the old dressing.
5. Throw the old dressing in the garbage bag. Try not to touch the inside of the old dressing.
6. Check your skin for:
  - ✓ redness
  - ✓ swelling
  - ✓ tenderness
  - ✓ soreness
  - ✓ drainage (pus, discharge)

If you have any of these signs, finish changing the dressing and call your clinic or home care nurse.

## **Cleaning the site**

1. Wash your hands.
2. Put on gloves if needed.
3. Using the antiseptic, clean the area around the catheter where it comes out of your skin as you were taught.
4. Do this 3 times using a clean antiseptic each time. Clean the area a little bigger than the size of your dressing.
5. Clean the part of the catheter that will be under the dressing with the antiseptic. Start where the catheter comes out of your skin.
6. Let the skin and catheter air dry.

## **Applying the dressing**

1. Loop the catheter and put on a clean dressing.
2. Make sure all the dressing edges are stuck to the skin.
3. Secure the catheter as taught.