

Department of  
Nursing

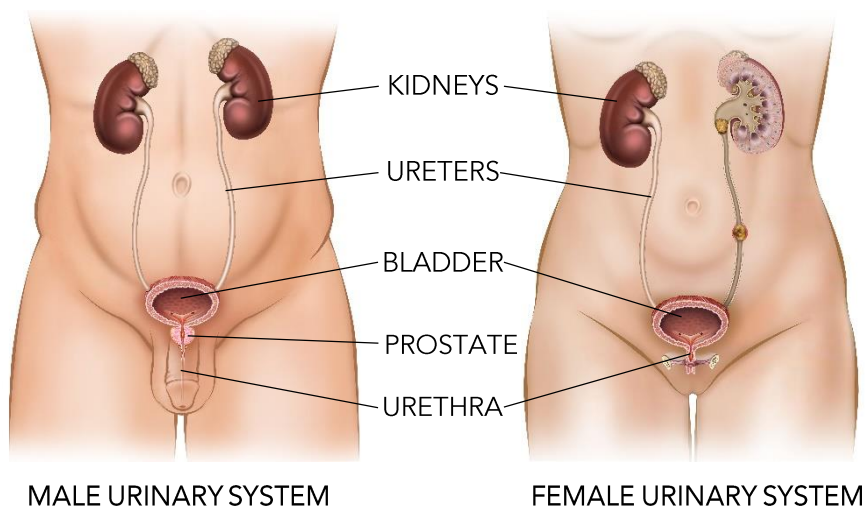
## Care of a PerCutaneous Nephrostomy (PCN) Tube



# Care of a PerCutaneous Nephrostomy (PCN) Tube

## What is a PerCutaneous Nephrostomy Tube?

A PerCutaneous Nephrostomy (PCN) tube is a small tube that is inserted into your kidney(s) to drain urine out of the body. The tube is placed at the back of your body, at either the left or right side, to avoid any obstruction caused by the urinary system.



## Why Do I Need a PCN tube?

The kidney becomes swollen as urine is accumulated inside due to blockages/obstructions along the urinary system. The causes of obstruction include stones, narrowing of the ureter, infection and harmless/benign or infectious/malignant growths. A PCN tube is inserted to divert urine and it allows the urine to drain out of the body directly from the upper urinary tract system.

## How Long Do I Need the PCN tube?

The PCN tube will need to stay in place until the urinary blockage is resolved. The blockage may be temporary or permanent and this will depend on the nature of the blockage. If the PCN tube needs to be inserted for a longer period of time, your doctor will order for the tube to be changed once every three months.

# Care of a PerCutaneous Nephrostomy (PCN) Tube

## How Do I Care for the PCN tube?

A nephrostomy bag will be attached to your back to collect the urine drainage from the PCN tube.

1. Keep the nephrostomy bag lower than your kidney to allow urine to flow well.
2. Empty the nephrostomy bag when it is half-filled or once every two to three hours.
3. Connect the nephrostomy bag to a 2-litre urine bag when sleeping (a larger capacity bag enables you to sleep well throughout the night). Disconnect the urine bag in the morning. Wash it with soap and water and keep aside.
4. You may move about and continue working/exercising/socialising with your nephrostomy bag.
5. It is easily hidden under your shirt during the day.



6. You can shower normally as the nephrostomy bag is waterproof. It is not necessary to cover it with plastic. Please towel dry the bag immediately after showering.
7. It is important to drink adequate fluids of approximately 1.5 to 2 litres a day to reduce urine infection and minimise blockage of the tubing. Ask your doctor how much you should drink if you have been instructed to restrict your fluid intake per day.

# Care of a Percutaneous Nephrostomy (PCN) Tube

## How Often Do I Drain the Urine?

Wash your hands and empty the nephrostomy bag when it is half-filled or once every two to three hours.

## How Often Should I Change the PCN Bag?

As the PCN bag is attached to your back, changing it requires help from a caregiver. The nephrostomy bag should be changed once every 7 to 10 days or earlier when there is leakage. Your nurse will assess and recommend a suitable nephrostomy bag as there are a few brands available on the market.

## Inform Your Doctor or Nurse if You Have the Following During Office Hours:

- Back pain or side pain
- Redness, swelling, tenderness or discharge around the tube
- Leakage of urine around the tube site
- Low urine output or foul-smelling urine
- No urine output in the nephrostomy bag for two hours

## Go to the Emergency Department After Office Hours if You Have the Following:

- Dislodgement of the PCN tube (do not reinsert the PCN tube by yourself)
- High fever with cloudy urine
- Heavily blood-stained urine
- No urine output in the nephrostomy bag for two hours

# Care of a PerCutaneous Nephrostomy (PCN) Tube

Your Appointment with Urology Nurse Clinician

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Clinic 2A – 68894258

Clinic 2B – 68894242

Operating Hours: Mon to Fri – 08.30am to 5.30pm

Sat, Sun and Public Holiday – Closed

## Clinics 2A/2B

TTSH Medical Centre, Level 2

Contact:

6357 7000 (Central Hotline)



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