

Nephrostomy Tube Care

Patient Information – Urology Service

What is a nephrostomy tube?

A nephrostomy tube is a catheter that has been passed through the skin and kidney tissue and sits in the drainage system of the kidney. The nephrostomy tube allows urine to drain directly from your kidney into a bag outside your body.

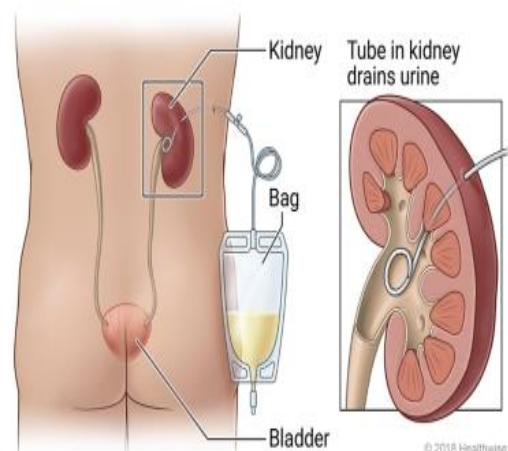
It is most commonly used when the flow of urine from the kidney to the bladder is blocked, which could be due to a stone, blood clot, tumour or damage to the urinary system, and is usually a temporary measure.

Sometimes, the placement of a nephrostomy tube is performed as a planned procedure, but it is more often done as an emergency in the case of severe infection or kidney failure. The doctor will explain how long the nephrostomy tube is likely to remain in place, which will depend on your individual situation. Your other kidney will still produce urine that will drain into your bladder.

How is a nephrostomy tube inserted?

The procedure is performed in the Interventional Radiology suite in the Radiology Service under ultrasound and x-ray guidance.

The Radiologist will give you a detailed explanation before the procedure with an opportunity to ask questions, and then will ask you to sign a consent form for the procedure.



How do I prepare for a nephrostomy tube?

- No solid food, including milky drinks, for six hours prior to your procedure. You may drink clear fluids up to two hours prior to your procedure, then nothing to eat or drink.
- You will be having a blood test before the procedure. This is to check you do not have an increased risk of bleeding.
- You will need a hospital operation gown to wear.
- You will travel to the Radiology Service on a bed / trolley and an orderly will escort to the interventional radiology suite.

What happens after the nephrostomy tube has been inserted?

You will return to the ward where your nurse will check your temperature, blood pressure, pulse and the new nephrostomy tube every hour for the first four hours. Usually you can eat and drink as normal following the procedure.

How long will the nephrostomy be in place?

This varies depending on the reason for its insertion. Your doctors will discuss this with you. If the nephrostomy tube is put in permanently, it will need to be replaced every six weeks in the Radiology Department.

How do I care for my nephrostomy tube?

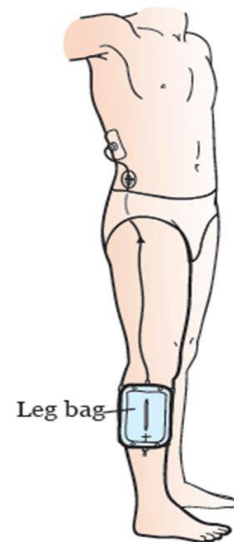
You will be taught to care for the nephrostomy tube before you go home, and a district nurse will be arranged to visit you to offer advice and support. You may shower after 48 hours following the insertion of the tube but try to keep the tube site dry.

Caring for your nephrostomy tube at home

During the day

The nephrostomy tube is attached to a drainage bag or leg bag. Urine drains from your kidney directly into this bag.

- The leg bag is held in place with leg straps.
- The bag may come in two lengths so that it can be worn on your calf or your thigh.
- This leg bag is to be worn at all times and only disconnected when a new bag is to be fitted.
- Empty the leg bag using the drainage tap at the bottom of the bag.
- This should be done every three to four hours or before it becomes over-full.
- The leg bag is changed every week.



Night bag

- At night a larger bag is attached to the bottom outlet of the leg bag or valve.
- The night bag has a larger capacity and longer tubing, allowing greater movement when in bed.
- A night bag can be attached to the catheter valve.

To fit the night bag

- Remove the coloured cap from the night bag tubing.
- Connect the fluted tip of the night bag into the bottom outlet of the leg bag.

- Open the outlet tap on the leg bag so the urine can run freely into the night bag.

What are my restrictions?

Movement may be restricted. You may find it uncomfortable to bend or stretch. Climbing stairs may be uncomfortable and this can be overcome by holding your hand over the nephrostomy site. Swimming is not recommended with a nephrostomy tube in place.

Can I exercise?

Gentle exercise is fine. More strenuous exercise may cause dislodgement of the nephrostomy tube, and pain so this should be avoided.

When can I go back to work?

This depends on your job and the nature of the problem. Light housework or office work is fine. Please discuss this with your doctor prior to discharge.

Passing urine

If you have one nephrostomy tube we would expect you to pass urine in the normal way, as the other kidney will still be draining urine into the bladder.

If you have two nephrostomy tubes, we would expect the tubes to drain all the urine, so passing urine would be very unlikely.

Experiencing issues with your nephrostomy tube

It is important to monitor the amount of urine draining from your nephrostomy tube. If there is very little urine or no urine in the bag check the placement of your nephrostomy tubing and drainage bag to ensure it is not kinked or blocked. Blood in the urine or around the tubing may be due to the irritation of the kidney by the tube or infection. If this happens, increase your fluid intake to clear the blood.

It is important to seek treatment if you experience fever, loin pain, significant blood in your urine and unexplained onset of confusion.

If you are experiencing the following issues with your nephrostomy tube, such as:

- Blocking
- Not draining properly
- Pain
- Leakage
- Accidentally pulled tube.

Please contact us straight away:

- Monday to Friday – 8am - 5pm
Phone the Interventional Radiology Service on (03) 364 1410
- After hours (including weekends and public holidays)
Phone the on-call Interventional Radiology Nurse on 027 221 1378

Interventional Radiology is an acute service and they prioritise and manage patients according to the urgency of their condition. This may mean you need to wait after presenting to our department or we may need to reschedule your appointment for another time. If this is required, we will do our best to let you know as soon as possible.

If you have had your nephrostomy tube removed

If you have had your tube removed or been given a date for surgery with the Urology Service, please let us know, as you will no longer require your appointment to change your tube. Please phone the Interventional Radiology Service on (03) 364 1410.

Supplies

If you require a catheter long-term, your doctor or nurse will arrange your catheter requirements through the District Nursing Service. The District Nursing Service will contact you once they receive the referral.

The prescribed allocation can be picked up from:

NURSE MAUDE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

95 Fitzgerald Avenue	Monday – Friday
Christchurch 8011	8.30 am – 4.30 pm
(03) 375 4200	Closed weekends and public holidays

The supplies can be delivered to your home by courier for a fee. If you go on holiday, remember to inform the Supply Department and arrange to take any supplies.

If you need additional supplies, they can be purchased from:

NURSE MAUDE HEALTH AND MOBILITY SHOP

285 Wairakei Road	Monday – Friday
Bryndwr	8.30 am – 4.30 pm
Christchurch 8053	Closed weekends and public holidays
(03) 375 4200	https://nursemaude.org.nz/health-and-mobility-shop/

Contact information

For more information about:

- Hospital and specialist services, go to www.cdhb.health.nz
- Your health and medication, go to www.healthinfo.org.nz
- NZ Continence Association, go to www.continence.org.nz

For information on parking, how to get to the hospital, and visiting hours, please visit www.cdhb.health.nz