

SPINAL CORD INJURY MANAGING YOUR BLADDER

OBJECTIVES

After attending this session on “Managing Your Bladder”, you will be able to:

1. State briefly the parts and functions of the urinary system.
2. Explain how the urinary system works in relation to your spinal cord injury.
3. State the difference between a reflex bladder and a flaccid bladder. Determine the type of bladder that you have.
4. Name the different strategies used to manage the bladder. Identify which strategy you use to manage your bladder.
5. State the procedure on how to perform intermittent catheterization.
6. Describe the necessary steps on how to take care of a foley, or a suprapubic catheter.
7. Name at least 3 common bladder problems and how to prevent them.
8. State how to prevent dysreflexia.

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There are at least 4 basic goals to achieve when managing your Bladder

1. To have low bladder volumes.
2. To have low bladder pressures
3. To avoid infections
4. To keep your skin dry.

It is important that the volumes of your bladder are kept low. You can keep the volumes low by watch your fluid intake and routinely empty your bladder

How To Empty Your Bladder After SCI

If you have an incomplete injury, you may regain all or some voluntary control of your bladder.

If you have a complete injury, one or a combination of the following bladder emptying techniques can be used:

1. Intermittent Catheterization (IC) - is a procedure whereby a catheter is inserted into the bladder several times during a day to drain your urine.

If you are on IC, the amount of urine that collects in your bladder between catheterizations needs to be 500 cc or less. To prevent your bladder from getting too full:

- a. Limit your fluid intake to 125 cc (about 4 oz.) per hour while awake.
- b. Perform IC 4 to 6 carefully timed catheterizations throughout the day

If you drink more than 125 cc per hour or if you do not catheterize yourself on time, you run the risk of exceeding the 500 cc bladder limit, which will make you prone to infections or reflux.

2. Foley and Suprapubic Catheters

These catheters are always draining your urine, so your bladder does not fill at all. In this case, you need to drink as much fluids as you can to flush the normal mineral deposits out of your urinary system.

3. Spontaneous / Stimulated Voiding

This technique of voiding requires a carefully balance fluid intake, if you do not want to wear a condom catheter or if you are a woman. Since a certain amount of urine will trigger Upper Motor Neuron bladder to empty, you may want to know what this volume is so that you can time yourself to get to an accessible bathroom to empty your bladder.

By knowing what volume your bladder will trigger and by watching your fluid intake (usually 125 cc per hour), you may be able to establish a routine time for bladder emptying.

Signs And Symptoms Of Urinary Tract Infection

1. Fever
2. Changes in urine
3. Incontinence between urination
4. General Malaise , such as Nausea, loss of appetite'
5. Sweating

Avoiding Infections

1. Maintain a consistent fluid intake to "wash out" bacteria and to limit stone formation.

***** Cranberry juice helps in making your urine acidic. Bacteria do not like to grow in an acidic environment.*****

2. Empty your bladder routinely and prevent overdistention.
3. While in the hospital, make sure that you and your nurses follow the proper techniques of catheterization.
4. Take your bladder medications at the times they are prescribed.
5. Keep your skin dry.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. Be sure that you perform your catheterization on a scheduled time.
2. Never omit a scheduled catheterization.
3. Monitor fluid intake, no more than 2400 cc in 24 hours.
4. Monitor your urine output.

If your urine output is too low (less than 150 cc), you may not be drinking enough or you are cathing too frequently.

If your bladder volume is too high (greater than 500 cc), you are probably drinking too much fluids, and you need to cath more often.

5. For clean technique, you will use the same catheter for each catheterization.
6. Clean your catheter with soap and warm water after each use and allow it to air dry.

***** Do Not Put Your Clean Catheter In A Bag Or Sealed Container Until It Is Completely Dry.*****

7. You and your family need to learn how to do intermittent catheterization.
8. When using an external catheter, make sure that you are using the right size external catheters.
9. If you have a skin breakdown on penis, keep external catheters off until area has healed.
10. It is important to take all the medications as prescribed by your doctor.
11. You should see your doctor yearly or as recommended for certain bladder tests.