

How do I do a Bladder Washout?

**QUEENSLAND
SPINAL CORD INJURIES
SERVICE (QSCIS)**

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What is a bladder washout?

This is a technique used to flush out the bladder by introducing clean water through your catheter and into your bladder.

Why would I need to do a bladder washout? This is a procedure which will not necessarily need to be done all the time however you may be required to do this if:

- You have a lot of sediment in your urine
- Your catheter has blocked and you have no spare to change it
- May be used in the treatment of some urinary tract infections – in this case you will be directed by your doctor or community nurse to do bladder washouts.

What are the advantages of doing bladder washouts?

- If you are unable to drink large amounts of fluids to treat a urinary tract infection or heavy sediment this may be an alternative method.
- If your catheter repeatedly blocks off and you are unwilling or unable to do frequent catheter changes.

What are the disadvantages of bladder washouts?

- Every time you disconnect your catheter from your drainage bag you are exposing an entry port for infection.
- You are introducing foreign fluid into your bladder.
- The procedure is time consuming.
- Studies have shown it has little or no effect on most infections.

Equipment required

- Male catheter tip plastic syringe
- 2 clean plastic ice cream containers (or similar)
- 500mls of room temperature treated tap water (i.e. not bore or tank water). If your water is not treated substitute 500mls of preboiled and strained water that has been cooled to room temperature.
- small supply of cotton wool balls
- small amount of methylated spirits (for swabbing the catheter connections only)
- clean bench area

Procedure for bladder washout

1. Select a clean area where the procedure is to be carried out. (We suggest a bench area in the bathroom with a clean towel over the top of it.)
2. This procedure can either be carried out by the patient or their carer – the instructions are the same for both.

3. Take the 500mls of prepared water and place within reach on the bench. Ensure the second container is alongside the first as this will be used for the used irrigation fluid and urine that is 'washed out' of the bladder during the procedure.
 4. Place the clean 60ml syringe alongside the containers on the prepared area. This is used to insert the water into the bladder.
 5. Place the cotton balls beside the container and have the methylated spirits within reach.
 6. Ensure the connection between the catheter and the drainage bag is exposed so you can get to it easily.
 - 7. Wash your hands thoroughly.**
 8. Take a cotton ball soaked with methylated spirits and wipe the connection thoroughly. Dispose of the cotton ball.
 9. Carefully take the connection apart and rest the catheter end in the empty container.
 10. Fill the syringe with 60mls of water from the water container. Insert the syringe into the end of the catheter and gently insert the water by pressing on the plunger of the syringe. Do not withdraw any fluid from the catheter at this stage.
 11. Remove the syringe being careful to put the open catheter end into the empty container. You will notice that some of the urine/water will drain into the container.
 12. Fill the syringe again with 60mls of water and insert into the bladder. Once the syringe is completely empty withdraw 40mls of the mixture of urine/water into the syringe then discard into the drainage container. Again you will notice there is drainage of urine/water from the catheter into the drainage container.
 13. Repeat step 12 until all 500mls of water has been used.
 14. On completion take another cotton wool ball soaked with methylated spirits and wipe the catheter connection again before reconnecting to the drainage bag.
 15. Discard urine/water into the toilet and using a small amount of disinfectant clean out the container.
 16. Both containers should be kept covered and scalded out once a week with boiling water.
- *If you experience pain at any time during the procedure you should cease the procedure immediately!*

Care of bladder washout equipment

You will need to sterilise your bladder washout equipment before and after each procedure by doing the following

- Into your clean water container place 500mls of tap water and either
 - ¼ milton tablet or
 - 7mls of milton solution
- Once the solution has mixed place syringe with plunger removed from main barrel into this solution.
- Leave the syringe to soak in the solution for one hour only.
- After one hour remove syringe and discard milton solution from container.
- Using clean towel or disposable paper towel dry container and syringe and store syringe in sealed container.

You must make up fresh milton solution each time you do this procedure.

For further information please contact:

The Spinal Injuries Unit
Phone (07) 3240 2215 or (07) 3240 2641
OR

The SIU Consultant on Call
Through PAH switchboard (after hours)

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