

Patient information factsheet

Removing your catheter at home

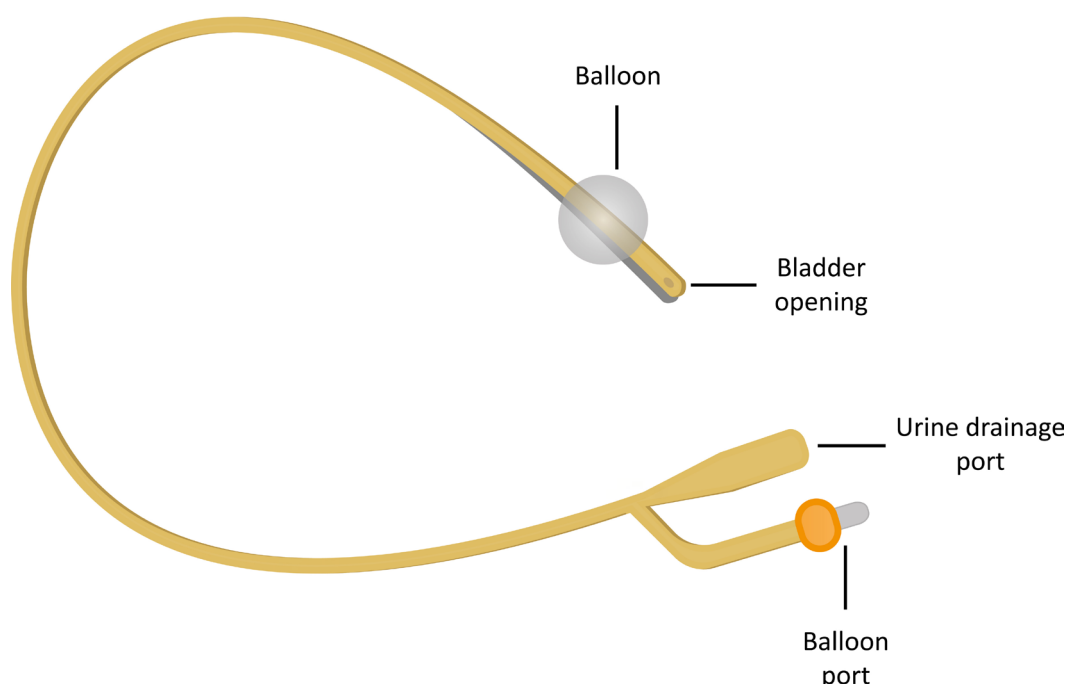
Trial without catheter (TWOC) after your robotic-assisted radical prostatectomy

We have given you this factsheet because you have recently had a robotic-assisted radical prostatectomy (a procedure to remove the prostate gland). After this procedure, a small, flexible tube (known as a urinary catheter) was temporarily inserted into your urethra (the tube that carries urine from your bladder out of your body) to allow urine to drain from your bladder while you recovered from the operation.

As part of your recovery, your urology team would like you to complete a 'trial without catheter (TWOC)', to see if you are able to pass urine normally once the catheter is removed. You can do this at home, if you are happy to, and this factsheet explains what you need to know beforehand. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is a trial without catheter (TWOC)?

A TWOC is a simple procedure that involves removing a catheter, which has been inserted via the urethra, from the bladder to see if you can pass urine naturally. Please see the diagram of a catheter below.



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Depending on your individual condition and circumstances, it can be performed either:

- in hospital by a nurse or
- at home by yourself.

Your urology team have reviewed your condition and individual circumstances and believe it is safe for you to remove your catheter yourself at home (as long as you feel confident to do so).

Before you leave hospital, we will:

- advise when to remove your catheter (this will usually be 7 to 10 days after your procedure)
- show you how to safely remove your catheter and give you written instructions
- provide you with any necessary equipment

What are the benefits of removing my catheter at home?

Benefits of removing your catheter at home include:

- being able to pass urine in the comfort of your own home (the hospital setting can make some people feel stressed which can make it harder for them to pass urine)
- one less trip to the hospital to have the catheter removed

What are the risks of removing my catheter at home?

As with all medical procedures, there are some possible risks when removing a urinary catheter at home.

Possible risks

- Infection - Bacteria can enter the bladder and cause a urine infection.
- Bleeding or soreness - You may notice a small amount of blood or discomfort when the catheter comes out.
- Difficulty passing urine - Some people find it hard to pee straight away.
- Not being able to empty your bladder fully - Your bladder may not empty properly, which can cause pain or swelling.
- Pain or burning when peeing - This can happen for a short time after removal but should improve with time.

What are the alternatives?

If you do not feel confident removing your catheter yourself at home, please let us know. We can arrange an appointment for a nurse to remove your catheter in hospital instead.

How should I prepare for removing my catheter?

No special preparation is needed.

How do I remove my catheter?

You should only try to remove your catheter at home if you have received the necessary training by a healthcare professional.

Equipment

You will need the following items for this procedure:

- a clean, empty syringe (we will provide you with this before you leave hospital)
- a bin or container

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Step-by-step guide

Please read and follow the instructions below carefully. If you are unsure about anything, please contact us.

We recommend removing your catheter early in the morning.

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water (this helps to reduce the risk of infection).
2. Sit on the toilet or stand in the shower or bath (some urine may leak from the catheter when you remove it so it is best to perform the procedure in a place where you can easily clean any drips up).
3. Your catheter is held in place with a balloon that is filled with sterile water (we will tell you how much water is in your balloon before you leave hospital). To be able to safely remove your catheter, you will need to empty this balloon. To do this, insert the syringe into the small balloon port of your catheter (see diagram on page 1) and pull the plunger back gently on the syringe. You should do this until you can't withdraw any more water from the balloon, and it is completely deflated and empty of water.
4. Carefully pull the catheter (tube) out of your urethra in one smooth, steady motion. This may feel uncomfortable but should not be painful.
5. Dispose of your catheter in your normal household waste bin (you may want to use a container to carry your catheter to the bin as it may drip some urine).

If you experience any problems while trying to remove your catheter, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

If you are able to pass urine without difficulty, this means your trial without catheter (TWOC) has been successful. You do **not** need to contact us, and you can continue with your usual activities.

If you are unable to pass urine at any time, contact us for advice using the details at the end of this factsheet. You may be at risk of urinary retention (a condition where you cannot fully empty your bladder) and may need to have another catheter inserted. If this is the case, we will arrange an appointment at the hospital for you to have this done by a nurse as soon as possible.

Do not try to reinsert your used catheter.

What should I expect after I remove my catheter?

It is normal to experience some changes after taking your catheter out. Everyone is different, but you may notice some of the following:

- The urge to pee quickly – Your bladder may feel fuller than usual at first, and you may need to pass urine sooner than expected.
- Mild stinging or burning – This can happen the first few times you pass urine. It should settle within a day or two.
- Small amounts of blood in your urine – It is common for your urine to be a light pink colour for a short time.
- Feeling unsure if you've emptied your bladder fully – Your bladder muscles may take some time to get back to normal.
- Leaking a little urine – Sometimes your bladder may take a few days to adjust to the catheter being out.

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If you have any concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What can I do to help myself?

- Drink plenty of fluids (unless your doctor has advised otherwise) to keep your urine clear and reduce the risk of infection.
- Take over-the-counter pain relief medication such as paracetamol if you feel discomfort (unless your doctor has advised you not to). Remember to always read the instructions included with the medication before taking it.
- Keep a note of when you pass urine, how often, and if you have any difficulties – this can help your healthcare team.
- Don't worry if it feels a bit different at first. Most people return to their normal bladder pattern (function) within a few days.

When should I seek urgent medical help?

You should contact us using the details below if at any point:

- you have been drinking fluids but have not managed to pass urine within four hours after removing your catheter **or**
- you experience stomach discomfort or pain.

Contact us

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us.

Urology enhanced recovery pathway (ERP)
Telephone: **07920 274648** (24-hour helpline)

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