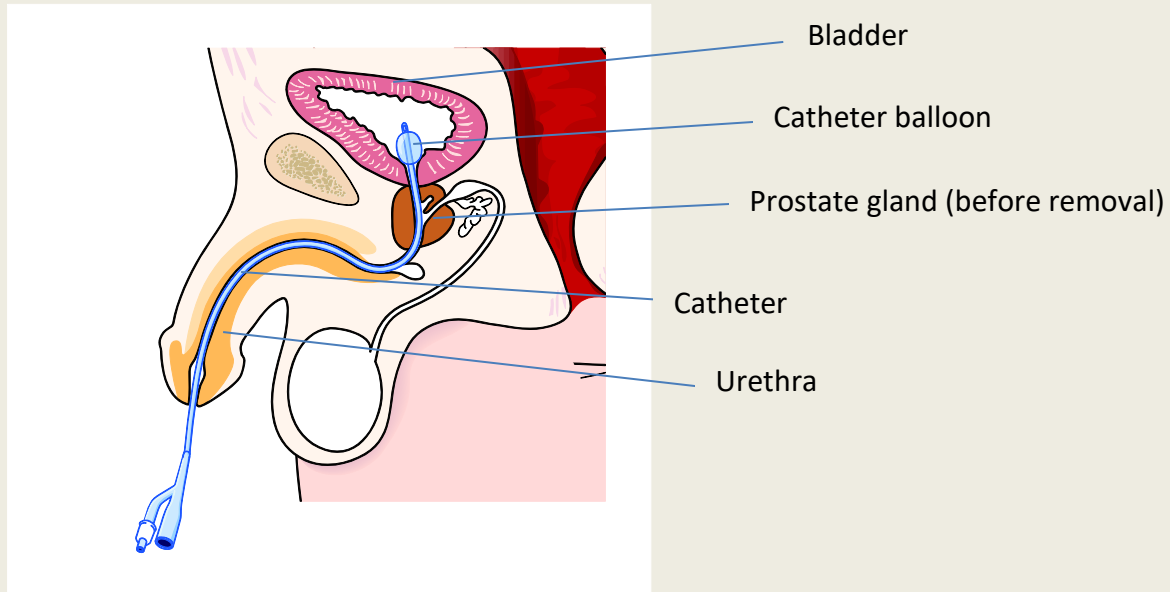


BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT CATHETERS

What is a catheter?

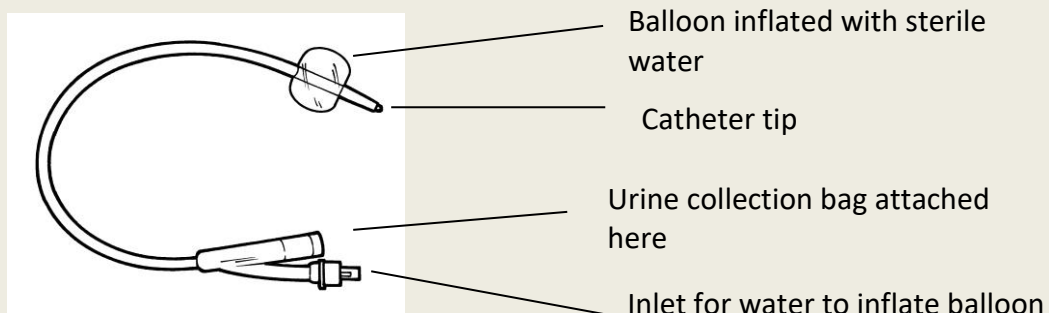
- A catheter is a thin tube that is passed through the urethra into your bladder before or during your surgery. The tip of the catheter simply sits in your bladder and is not attached in any way.



Normally urine collects in your bladder, which is held closed by muscles around the bladder “neck”, or exit. When you empty your bladder, these muscles relax and allow the urine to drain out of your body through the urethra, which is the narrow passage that ends at the tip of your penis.

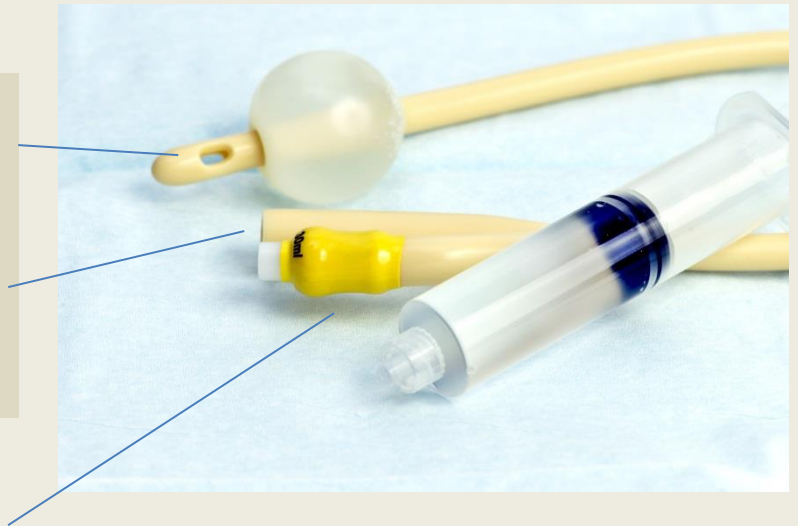
Prostate surgery affects the urethra and the muscles that keep the bladder closed. A catheter is needed to keep the bladder empty, to prevent urine leakage and allow healing.

- After it is inserted, a small balloon near the inside end of the catheter is inflated with sterile water. This balloon prevents the catheter from slipping back out.



Small holes at the end of the catheter allow urine to drain freely from your bladder through the tube.

The other end of the catheter is connected to a bag, which collects the urine.



When it is time to remove your catheter, the balloon will be deflated so that the catheter can be taken out comfortably.

Why do I need a catheter?

Your urethra (passage that you pee through) passes through your prostate, and because of this it will be cut during your surgery and then re-attached to your bladder. The catheter allows the area between your urethra and your bladder to heal.

The muscles and nerves that control urination may also be affected by the surgery. Because the catheter allows urine to drain freely from your bladder, these muscles and nerves are provided with an opportunity to recover.

How long will I have a catheter?



Most men will have a catheter for between one and three weeks. Some men may have one for longer. You will be given an appointment to have it removed.

Is a catheter uncomfortable?

A catheter can be uncomfortable at first. But most men become used to it quite quickly. It might become uncomfortable if it isn't supported properly. Ask your doctor or nurse about getting a catheter retainer strap to hold the catheter tube in place on your thigh.