



# Having ultrasound guided supra-pubic catheter insertion

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**This leaflet explains what ultrasound guided supra-pubic catheter (SPC) insertion is, what happens during the procedure, what the possible risks are and aftercare of your catheter. It is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor, but can act as a starting point for such a discussion.**

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You should have time to discuss your situation with your own consultant and the radiologist or the physician associate who will be doing the procedure. You should be happy that you understand what is involved as you will be required to sign a consent form prior to undergoing the procedure.

## **What is an ultrasound guided supra-pubic catheter insertion?**

This is a minimally invasive way of draining urine from your bladder through a small soft plastic tube inserted through the wall of your lower abdomen (tummy), using ultrasound guidance. The procedure is carried out under local anaesthetic, i.e. you are awake but the skin is numbed.

## **Why do I need an image guided supra-pubic catheter insertion?**

Supra-pubic catheters are used for patients who require long-term drainage of urine from their bladder when they cannot empty their bladder normally.

## **Who has made this decision?**

A consultant urologist, following discussion with other specialists involved in your care. Supra-pubic catheter insertion under ultrasound guidance is an alternative to insertion of these catheters in theatres under general anaesthetic, which is more invasive.

## **Who will be performing the procedure?**

A radiologist or physician associate who has undergone specialist training and who regularly performs this and other similar procedures, will carry out the procedure.

## **Where will the procedure take place?**

In the ultrasound scan room in the X-ray Department of the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

## **What happens before the procedure?**

- Ideally, blood-thinning medication, such as Warfarin, Dabigatran, Rovaroxaban, Tinzaparin or Clopidogrel, are stopped temporarily prior to the procedure. This is not always possible or you may be required to take additional short-acting blood thinners for a few days before. If you are at home and taking any of these medications and have not received instructions to stop them please contact the X-ray Department on 0118 322 8368.
- Please avoid eating for 6 hours. Clear fluids can be consumed up to 2 hours pre-procedure
- Please take all your normal medication other than those that have been stopped for the drainage.
- You should already have a tube, called a catheter, in the bladder, which has been inserted through the penis or urethra. This allows us to fill the bladder with sterile fluid during the procedure if we need to. If you do not have a penile or urethral catheter please contact the X-ray Department on 0118 322 8368. We may need to arrange insertion on the day of the procedure.
- If a urethral catheter cannot be placed for any reason, where appropriate, we may ask you to drink a large volume of water/squash prior to the procedure and to not pass urine until the SPC is placed.
- Antibiotics will be given before the procedure via a cannula in a vein in your arm.

## **What happens during the procedure?**

We will ask you to undress and put on a hospital gown. You will then be taken into the ultrasound scanning room and asked to lie on a couch.

A preliminary ultrasound scan will be carried out to view the bladder. If the bladder does not contain enough urine it will be filled with sterile water and local anaesthetic through your urethral catheter. Once the operator decides where to place the needle, he or she will clean the skin with antiseptic fluid and inject the skin and deeper tissues with local anaesthetic. This will sting briefly before the area goes numb. The operator will then insert a needle followed by a guide wire and supra-pubic catheter in to the bladder. The fluid will then be drain into an attached catheter bag.

Finally, the existing urethral catheter will then be removed.

## **How long will it take?**

The whole procedure takes about 30 minutes but this includes time to prepare the equipment.

## **Will it hurt?**

You will feel stinging as the local anaesthetic is injected. Some people also feel some discomfort when the bladder is filled with sterile water and as the needles, guide wire or supra-pubic catheter enter the bladder, which may make you feel as though you wish to urinate. These sensations pass quickly.

## **What happens afterwards?**

We will keep you for monitoring in the X-ray recovery area for 1 hour afterwards. Providing you feel well, you can then leave hospital.

## **What are the risks and complications?**

An ultrasound guided supra-pubic catheter insertion is generally safe but there are risks and occasional complications. These include:

- Failure to get the catheter in.
- Pain. It is normal to experience some pain around the insertion site shortly after the procedure. If the pain becomes severe then you should contact the Royal Berkshire Hospital X-ray Department (Mon-Fri 8am-6pm) on 0118 322 8368 or out of hours, bank holidays and weekends contact the Emergency Department (A&E) on 0118 322 7019.
- Bleeding. Very occasionally bleeding can occur. Some bleeding in your catheter bag is normal; however, this bleeding should settle within 72 hours (unless you are taking blood thinning drugs).
- Infection. The likelihood of infection is very low. If you experience a high temperature or your urine has a strong odour, contact your GP.
- Damage to the bowel is a very rare but serious complication.

## **Following the procedure**

The Urology Procedures Department at the Royal Berkshire Hospital looks after your supra-pubic catheter. They will invite you within 10-12 weeks after the insertion to change the tube and subsequent changes may be performed by the practice or district nurses.

## **How to care for your supra-pubic catheter**

- Try to drink a good amount over the next 48 hours. Drinking 2 glasses of cranberry juice daily can be beneficial and may help in the prevention of infection.
- Personal hygiene is also important to reduce the risk of infection:
  - Have a bath or shower each day.
  - If you have a dressing over the suprapubic site, carefully remove and dispose of it after 3 days / 72 hours.
  - Use a designated clean cloth, unscented soap and warm water.
  - Dry using a clean towel and pat the catheter bag dry.
  - Apply a clean dressing if necessary.
- Constipation can prevent your catheter draining freely and can cause leakage of urine. To avoid constipation eat a healthy, balanced diet including wholemeal bread, fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Your sex life should not be affected as you can simply tape the catheter out of the way.
- Keep the catheter bag below the level of your bladder as gravity will help aid drainage.
- Many people continue to work and exercise as normal. If you need advice about resuming any activities, don't hesitate to ask your doctor or nurse.
- Change your catheter bags every 5-7 days as recommended by the doctor.
- Empty the catheter bag when it is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full.

**Possible problems and how to deal with them**

Problem	How to deal with it
Overgranulation (overgrowth of the tissue surrounding the insertion site).	Gently twist and move your catheter daily to avoid tightening of the skin. Contact your GP or the practice nurse for further advice.
Urine not draining into bag.	Ensure there are no kinks in the tubing. Make sure the bag is below the level of the bladder.
Urine leaking through your urethra (the tube you usually pass urine through) – this can be caused by strenuous activity.	Ensure the bag is draining correctly. Contact your GP or the practice nurse for advice.
Urine leaking around your catheter.	Make sure the bag is not too full or pulling on your catheter. Contact the X-ray department for advice.
Prolonged pain or cramps.	Contact your GP or the practice nurse for advice.
Blood in your urine.	Drink plenty of fluids. Contact your GP or the practice nurse for advice.
Urine not draining after 2-3 hours.	Contact your GP or the practice nurse for advice.
Catheter has fallen out.	Contact the X-ray department or attend A+E asap if out of hours.

**Further information**

If you would like any further information please call the X-ray Department at the Royal Berkshire Hospital 0118 322 8368.

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

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RBFT Radiology, September 2025

Next review due: September 2027