



## **Having Your Urinary Catheter Removed After Gynecologic Surgery**

### **What is a urinary catheter?**

A urinary catheter, or Foley catheter, is a soft tube placed into the bladder to drain urine/pee at all times.

### **Why is a urinary catheter used?**

A urinary catheter is used to keep your bladder empty while you are healing after surgery. Surgery and medications given during surgery can change how well the bladder works. This may make it difficult for you to urinate (pee) after surgery. If you had surgery on your bladder, it is important for the bladder to stay empty of urine for a few days so that the incisions/cuts can heal.

Your catheter will stay in place for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks.

### **Where will I go to have the catheter removed?**

Your catheter will be removed in the outpatient clinic by a nurse.  
Your appointment is on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

### **Will the catheter need to be replaced?**

If you are not able to urinate (pee) normally after the catheter is taken out, a new catheter may be inserted. Or you may be taught to “self-cath” for a few days. This means inserting a very small tube in your own bladder after you go to the bathroom to check how much urine (pee) is left in the bladder.

### **What do I do after my catheter is removed?**

- Go to the bathroom at least every 2 ½ -3 hours while you are awake.
- Urinate (pee) before you go to bed Drink plenty of water (6 to 8 cups) each day.
- Avoid or decrease caffeine

- Limit what you drink after the evening meal.

### **What if I have trouble emptying my bladder?**

If you have trouble emptying your bladder, do the following:

- Urinate normally then stand up and sit back down on the commode. Try again to urinate.
- Sit in a tub of warm water and try to urinate in the tub.

### **When should I call my clinic or doctor?**

Call your clinic or doctor if you have questions and if you have any of the following symptoms:

#### **Retention** (unable to empty your bladder)

- You feel as if you need to urinate but can't
- You are unable to urinate for more than 3 hours
- You notice your stomach swelling

#### **Infection**

- You have strong lower back pain
- You have chills or fever of 100.4 F or 38 C or greater
- You have burning pain when you start or stop urinating
- You feel the urge to urinate more often than usual
- You have nausea and vomiting

### **How do I reach my doctor when I have problems and questions?**

#### **Monday—Friday, 8:00 am—5:00 pm**

- Oncology Clinic: 984-974-7822
- OB-GYN Nurse Advice Line: 984-974-6823

#### **After Hours, Weekends and Holidays**

Call 984-974-1000 and ask for the GYN Resident on call.

*Approved by NC Women's Hospital Patient Education Committee, November 18, 2002. Reviewed & approved November 20, 2007, Reviewed/Revised August 16, 2011, Revised 2/18/2016.*