



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

How to Cap Your Biliary Drainage Catheter

This information explains how to do a capping trial on your biliary (BIH-lee-AYR-ee) drainage catheter.

About Capping Trials

Your doctor may want you to do a capping trial on your biliary drainage catheter. This is done to make sure bile can flow easily through your body. Bile is a fluid made by your liver. It helps break down food. You'll do a capping trial to also make sure your bile ducts are open. These ducts are tubes in your body that carry bile in and out of your liver.

Capping your drainage catheter helps your bile travel down the catheter into your body. If you pass the capping trial, you'll no longer need a drainage bag (see Figure 1).

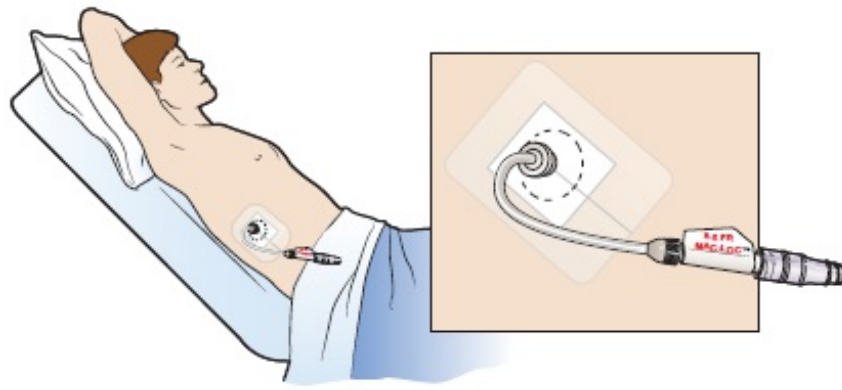


Figure 1. Capped biliary drainage catheter

Your nurse may cap your catheter for you while you're in the hospital. You'll need to do it yourself when you're at home.

How to Cap Your Drainage Catheter

1. Gather your supplies. You'll need:
 - An alcohol wipe
 - A needleless connector
2. Disconnect the stopcock from your drainage catheter (see Figure 2).

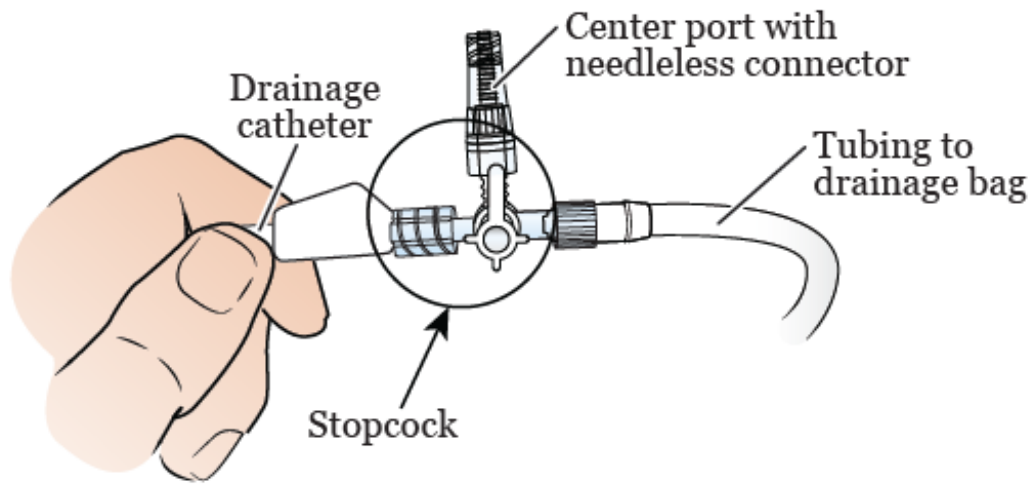


Figure 2. Disconnecting the stopcock from your drainage catheter

3. Clean the end of your drainage catheter with an alcohol wipe for 15 seconds (see Figure 3).

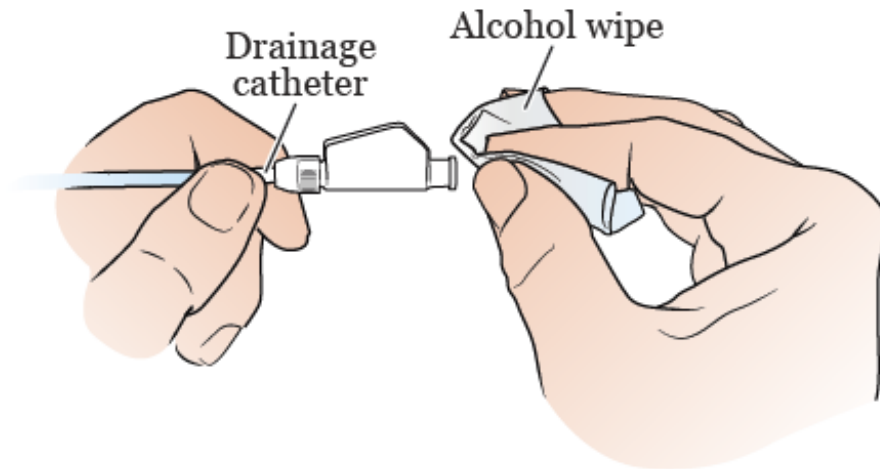


Figure 3. Cleaning the end of your drainage catheter

4. Connect the needleless connector to the end of your drainage catheter (see Figure 4).

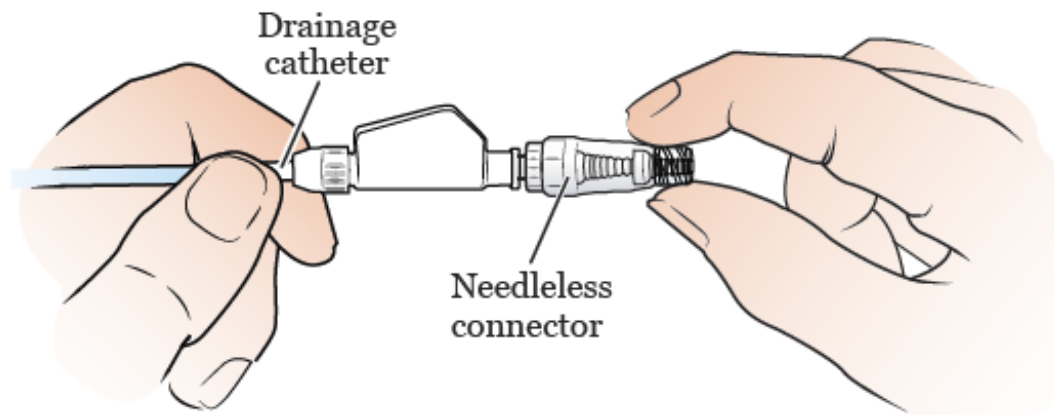


Figure 4. Connecting the needleless connector to your drainage catheter

Remember to flush your catheter on the same schedule. You don't need to take the needleless connector off when flushing your catheter. Clean the needleless connector with an alcohol wipe for 15 seconds. Then attach the syringe to the needleless connector and flush through it.

Remember to change the needleless connector every 7 days or when it gets dirty.

While Your Catheter Is Capped

If you have a capped biliary drainage catheter, you need to watch out for these symptoms:

- Leaking around your catheter insertion site
- A temperature higher than 100.4 °F (38 °C) or chills
- Pain, often in your abdomen (belly) around your catheter insertion site

These symptoms can happen any time after your catheter has been capped. If you have any of these symptoms, call Interventional Radiology to let us know. Then, uncap your catheter. To do this, remove the needleless connector from your catheter. Clean your catheter with an alcohol wipe for 15 seconds and reconnect it to a new drainage bag. Your symptoms should get better within 30 to 45 minutes. If they don't, call Interventional Radiology for instructions on what to do next.

Don't recap your catheter without calling Interventional Radiology first.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, call your doctor in Interventional Radiology. You can reach them Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If it's after 5:00 p.m., a weekend, or a holiday, call 212-639-2000. Ask to speak to the Interventional Radiology fellow on call.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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