

Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infections

Patient Education Script for Health Care Workers

How to use this script

Use this script to help provide education on **catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI)** to a patient or resident. Be sure to give the patient a copy of the fact sheet for patients and residents to help reinforce the information you provide to them verbally.

Step 1: Provide context

After a patient has been told they need a catheter, explain there is risk of infection associated with the placement of a urinary catheter.

Suggested script

- [Patient name], since you [will be needing a catheter/have a catheter], I want to speak with you about how we can prevent any issues, like infections.
- There are certain infections, called catheter-associated urinary tract infections, or CAUTIs, that can happen if you have a catheter.
- These infections can be serious, but the good news is, they are preventable and treatable.

Step 2: Introduce the fact sheet

Provide the patient or resident or a present family member with the printed fact sheet. Explain why you are providing it.

Suggested script

- I have this fact sheet I want to share with you. It has facts on CAUTIs and tips for staying healthy and preventing infections.
- I'd like to briefly read through it with you and make sure I address any questions or concerns you may have.

If the patient or resident agrees, you can begin to briefly skim through the fact sheet content with them.

Step 3: Explain how CAUTIs occur

Summarize the "What is a catheter?" and "What is a CAUTI?" sections of the patient fact sheet. Provide supplemental information on the part the health care team plays to help prevent infection.

Suggested script

- A urinary catheter is a thin tube placed in your urethra to drain urine or pee from your bladder. The pee collects into a bag attached to the tube.
- Your catheter [will be/was] placed by a person who was trained on how to properly and safely place them.
- They [will/did] clean their hands, and [will/did] wear gloves. They will make sure your body is clean and free of germs before putting the catheter in as well.

- If germs do get into your urinary tract when a catheter is placed or through draining or adjusting your catheter after it is placed, you may get an infection.
- Do you have any questions or concerns about the process?

At this point, you may also want to describe why the health care team decided a catheter should be used for this patient or resident.

Step 4: Explain prevention steps for the patient or resident

Next, explain ways the patient or resident can help lower their risk of infection.

Suggested script

- There are things you can do to help lower your risk of developing an infection.
- First, you can always ask me or other health care staff if you still need your catheter. The longer you have a catheter, the more likely you are to get an infection. So, feel free to ask us if you really still need one. We can help determine if one is still needed and answer any questions you have.
- Another way you can help is by washing your hands or using hand sanitizer before touching your catheter, the tubing, or the collection bag. You can also remind anyone touching your catheter, whether it be health care staff or a family member, to clean their hands too. Cleaning your hands helps remove germs that could potentially cause an infection.
- Never pull or twist the catheter tubing and make sure the collection bag is positioned below your hips, but stays off the floor. This helps pee drain properly.

Step 4: Describe signs and symptoms

List signs and symptoms of CAUTIs and what to do if they appear.

Suggested script

- If you ever feel feverish, have burning or pain in your lower abdomen (gesture with your hands), or if you notice your pee is bloody, let us know. Those could be signs of infection.
- After your catheter is removed, if you feel pain when peeing, or feel like you need to go more frequently, that could also be a sign of infection. Make sure you contact your health care team and let them know your symptoms.
- There are simple blood and urine tests that can help determine whether you have an infection.
- If testing shows you do have an infection, we can remove your catheter, treat with antibiotics, or both.
- Your health care team will help determine the best way to treat your infection. [If applicable: You may need to stay in the hospital longer.]

Step 5: Wrap up and provide fact sheet

Provide the patient or resident or a present family member the opportunity to ask you any follow up questions. Provide them with the patient fact sheet.

Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infections

Facts and Tips for Patients and Residents

What is a catheter?

A urinary catheter is a thin tube placed in your urethra to drain urine from your bladder. The urine collects into a bag attached to the tube.

What are CAUTIs?

Catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs) are infections of the urinary tract (bladder, kidneys, ureters, or urethra) caused by a urinary catheter.

CAUTIs are one of the most common types of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), but they are preventable and treatable.



Causes

CAUTIs can happen when germs enter the body through the catheter. Some germs are naturally present in and on your body but don't cause infection.



If germs get into your urinary tract when a catheter is placed, you may get an infection. CAUTIs are more likely to happen when a catheter is used for a long time.

Who is at risk?

Anyone with a catheter can develop a CAUTI. Some people with weakened immune systems, and people who have a catheter for a long period of time, are at higher risk.



Signs and symptoms

Tell your health care team if you have:

- Fever
- Bloody urine
- Burning feeling while urinating
- Burning or pain in the area below your stomach
- Feeling like you need to urinate more often than usual



How do I know if I have a CAUTI?

Based on your symptoms, your health care team may recommend testing to determine if you have a CAUTI. They may ask you to provide a sample of your urine or draw your blood for the test.

Treatment

CAUTIs can be treated with antibiotics or by removing or changing the catheter. Your health care team will help determine the best treatment for you.



Prevention

To help lower your risk of CAUTI if you have a urinary catheter:

- ✓ Make sure you understand why your catheter is needed. If you're unsure, ask your health care team why and if you still need one.
- ✓ Clean your hands before and after touching the catheter tubing and collection bag. You can wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
- ✓ Make sure the collection bag is positioned below your hips and off the floor.
- ✗ Don't tug, pull, or twist the catheter tubing.