

DID YOU KNOW THAT PROLONGED USE OF URINARY CATHETERS CAN BE HARMFUL?



Sometimes when you have a stay in the hospital, a *Foley catheter* – a small plastic tube that drains urine from your bladder into a bag - is needed.

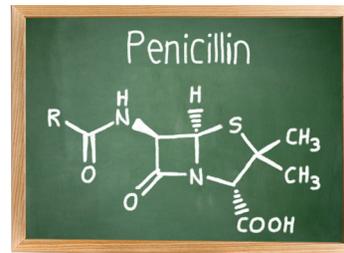
Catheters can be very helpful in making sure that you are getting enough fluids and that your body is able to make urine.

A catheter can make you more likely to get an infection so they have to be checked often. And the longer you have a catheter the more likely an infection becomes. Using catheters when they aren't really needed or for longer than they should be used increases your risk of a serious infection.

YOU MAY THINK YOU HAVE A PENICILLIN ALLERGY, BUT YOU MAY BE WRONG.

Antibiotics in the penicillin family are very common antibiotics used to treat infections. You may have been told that you have an allergy to penicillins.

Fortunately, you can be given other antibiotics, but they may be harder to take and can sometimes cause serious side effects, and may not work as well as the penicillin antibiotic.



Only 1 in 10 patients that report a penicillin allergy actually have one.

In order to help plan antibiotic therapy, you may be asked questions such as:

- When did the reaction occur?
- How soon after taking the penicillin did the reaction occur?
- What was the reaction?
- How/where was the reaction treated?

Provincial Laboratory Services

Choosing Wisely

Patient Guide

2017 Edition:

Vitamins

Urine Cultures and Antibiotic Use

Penicillin Allergy



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VITAMIN TESTING:

WHAT IS VITAMIN D?

Vitamin D is an essential nutrient for healthy bones and a strong immune system. Vitamin D is naturally formed under the skin upon exposure to sun light. Vitamin D is also available from external sources such as fish, eggs, fortified milk and cereals and vitamin D supplements.



DO I NEED TO BE TESTED FOR VITAMIN D LEVELS?

For most people, vitamin D testing is not needed.

WHO SHOULD BE TESTED FOR VITAMIN D?

Vitamin D testing is done in consultation with your physician. Vitamin D test is recommended in individuals with poor intestinal absorption of food, kidney failure, osteoporosis (“thinning” of the bones), osteomalacia (softening of the bones) and rickets (especially babies).

WHAT IS VITAMIN B12?

Vitamin B12 is an essential nutrient for several biological functions related to healthy nerve tissue, brain function and red blood cell formation.

Vitamin B12 is not formed in the body and is only provided from external sources such as meat, dairy products and fortified food.

SHOULD I HAVE MY VITAMIN B12 LEVELS TESTED?

Vitamin B12 deficiency is uncommon and testing is not needed for most people.

Vitamin B12 testing is done in consultation with your physician. Vitamin B12 test is recommended in individuals with unexplained persistent anemia, poor intestinal absorption of food or suffering from persistent neurological symptoms such as pain, numbness, and tingling in hands or feet.

URINE CULTURES AND ANTIBIOTIC USE:

WHEN SHOULD A URINE CULTURE BE DONE TO DETERMINE A BLADDER INFECTION?

In general, having 2 or more of the following features is a warning sign that you may have a bladder infection and a urine culture should be ordered:

- peeing more often than usual, having a sudden, strong urge to pee, or not making it to the bathroom in time;
- bladder or lower back pain;
- pain when peeing;
- blood in your urine.

WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT ANTIBIOTIC USE?

Antibiotics are used to treat many different types of infections caused by bacteria, one of which is a bladder infection.

Using antibiotics when you do not have an infection may result in doing more harm to yourself. Antibiotics aren't always the easiest medications to take – they can upset your stomach or cause other unwanted effects, they might interfere with other medications you're taking, and they may play a role in the development of superbugs which could make you even sicker.

Taking antibiotics when you don't need them may make them not work as well when you have an actual infection.

IF MY URINE IS CLOUDY OR SMELLIER THAN NORMAL, IT SHOULD BE TESTED BECAUSE I LIKELY HAVE A BLADDER INFECTION....RIGHT?

No. Testing your urine for bacteria (urine culture) should only be performed under certain conditions. Cloudy or smelly urine, without having other symptoms, do not indicate an infection.



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