

What is bladder irrigation?

Bladder irrigation is a procedure that washes mucous from your child's bladder. Irrigation means to flush or rinse. The procedure includes pushing fluid into the bladder through a catheter and then gently pulling it out with a syringe (aspirating).

Why does my child need bladder irrigation?

Bladder irrigation is needed in children who have had bladder augmentation. It cleans mucous from the bladder to allow the urine to drain easily through a catheter. The catheter can get clogged with mucous if it is not flushed regularly. The mucous comes from the intestine tissue that is used for bladder augmentation.

How often should I irrigate the bladder?

You may need to do bladder irrigation up to 5 times a day when the bladder is healing after the initial surgery. When the bladder has healed, you will need to do it 1 time each day.

What supplies do I need?

- 60 mL (milliliter) catheter tipped syringe
- Plastic container for water
- Sterile water
 - Boil water for 10 minutes. Let it cool to room temperature. Keep the extra water in the refrigerator. Warm it to room temperature before using it for the next irrigation.
- Container for collecting urine and drainage
- Catheter plug or clamp

How do I prepare to irrigate the bladder?

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Gather your supplies.
- Pour about 500 mL of sterile water or saline into a clean container.
- Start with an empty bladder. Catheterize your child to remove urine. Use a syringe to gently pull out the urine. This empties the bladder all the way.

How do I irrigate the bladder?

There are 3 parts to irrigate the bladder.

Part 1

1. Pull 50 mL of sterile water or saline into the syringe.

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2. Attach the syringe to the catheter.
3. Gently push 50 mL of fluid into the bladder. Do not push the fluid fast or hard.
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 until a total of 150 mL of fluid has gone into the bladder.
5. Now gently pull and push on the syringe. This is called barbotage. It helps to loosen and break up the mucous so it can be removed.
6. Remove the fluid (about 150 mL) from the bladder by pulling it out with the syringe. Do not pull back fast or hard. Do not try to pull back more than you pushed in.

Part 2

Complete Part 1 a total of 3 times. You will use a total of 150 mL of fluid each time.

Part 3

Let any remaining fluid drain from the catheter into the toilet. It is OK if a small amount of fluid remains in the bladder.

Wash your hands and supplies with warm soapy water. Dry them. Store them in a clean place for the next irrigation. Your child's doctor may have you use smaller volumes in the first few weeks after the initial surgery.

Normal saline recipe

Your child's doctor may tell you to use normal saline for bladder irrigation. Here are 2 recipes:

- **Option 1:** Mix 1 liter of sterile water with 1 teaspoon (tsp) of table salt. Shake until the salt is dissolved.
- **Option 2:** Boil 2 liters of tap water for 10 minutes. Add 2 teaspoons of table salt to the boiled water. Pour it into the plastic bottle you got from the hospital.

When should I call the doctor?

Call your child's doctor if:

- Your child has a fever higher than 101.5°F.
- The catheter is not able to be flushed or is not draining.
- Your child has a lot of pain with irrigation.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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