Indwelling Urinary Catheter - The Importance of Maintaining a Closed Drainage System

Urinary Tract Infections can easily occur when the client has an Indwelling Urinary Catheter. In fact - this type of infection accounts for approximately 40% of all Nosocomial infections.

As a nursing assistant, your observations and actions can play a big part in prevention of a Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infection. Maintaining a closed drainage system can greatly reduce the client’s risk.

#1  Wear disposable gloves and wash hands immediately before and after handling any part of the drainage system.
   • Hands are the major route of transmission of bacteria

#2  An obstructed urine flow must be maintained at all times. Measures such as:
   • Keeping the drainage bag below the bladder
     o Raising the bag above the bladder can cause contaminated urine from the drainage bag to flow into the client’s bladder
   • Make sure urine is not allowed to collect in the tubing. A free flow of urine must be maintained to prevent infection
     o Improper drainage can occur if the tubing is kinked or twisted. Urine can pool in the loops of the tubing and can potentially obstruct urine flow from the bladder
   • Keep the drainage bag off of the floor
     o The floor is dirty - if the bag is on the floor it can become contaminated

#3  Empty the drainage bag using clean technique.
   • Wash hands and wear gloves
     o Bacteria transmission
   • Empty the bag at regular intervals, making sure that the drainage valve is not contaminated
     o Contamination of the drainage value can cause infection. Disinfect valve prn
   • Empty the bag in a separate collecting receptacle for each client and for each device
     o Each client should have his own collecting receptacle that is labeled and kept in bathroom - not on the floor - to prevent cross contamination
   • Avoid letting the bag touch the floor when emptying
     o To avoid contamination