

# Chapter 18

## Assisting With Urinary Elimination

# The Urinary System

- The urinary system:
  - Removes waste products from the blood
  - Maintains the body's water balance

# Normal Urination

- The healthy adult produces about 1500 mL (milliliters) or 3 pints of urine a day.
- Many factors affect urine production.
  - Age
  - Disease
  - The amount and kinds of fluid ingested
  - Dietary salt
    - A diet high in salt causes the body to retain water.
  - Body temperature
  - Perspiration
  - Drugs

# Normal Urination, cont'd.

- Urination (voiding) means the process of emptying urine from the bladder.
- Frequency of urination is affected by:
  - The amount of fluid intake
  - Habits
  - Available toilet facilities
  - Activity, work, and illness

# Normal Urination, cont'd.

- Observations

- Normal urine:
  - Is pale yellow, straw-colored, or amber
  - Is clear with no particles
  - Has a faint odor
- Observe urine for color, clarity, odor, amount, and particles.
- Ask the nurse to observe urine that looks or smells abnormal.

# Observations to Report

- Report these problems:
  - Dysuria—painful or difficult urination
  - Hematuria—blood in the urine
  - Nocturia—frequent urination at night
  - Oliguria—scant amount of urine
  - Polyuria—abnormally large amounts of urine
  - Urinary frequency—voiding at frequent intervals
  - Urinary incontinence—the involuntary loss or leakage of urine
  - Urinary urgency—the need to void at once

# Bedpans

- Bedpans are used by:
  - Persons who cannot be out of bed
  - Women, for voiding and bowel movements
  - Men, for bowel movements
- Standard bedpans and fracture pans are used.
- Fracture pans are used:
  - By persons with casts
  - By persons in traction
  - By persons with limited back motion
  - After spinal cord injury or surgery
  - After a hip fracture or hip replacement surgery

# Urinals

- Men use urinals to void.
  - The man stands if possible.
  - Some sit on the side of the bed or lie in bed.
  - Some need support when standing.
  - You may have to place and hold the urinal for some men.
- Remind men:
  - To hang urinals on bed rails
  - To use the call light after using the urinal
  - Not to place urinals on over-bed tables and bedside stands
- If beds do not have bed rails, follow agency policy for where to place urinals.

# Commodes

- A commode is a chair or wheelchair with an opening for a container.
- Persons unable to walk to the bathroom often use commodes.
- Some commodes are wheeled into bathrooms and placed over toilets.
  - The container is removed.
  - After the commode is positioned over the toilet, wheels are locked.

# Urinary Incontinence

- Urinary incontinence is the involuntary loss or leakage of urine.
  - It may be temporary or permanent.
- The basic types are:
  - Stress incontinence
  - Urge incontinence
  - Overflow incontinence
  - Functional incontinence
  - Reflex incontinence
  - Mixed incontinence

# Urinary Continence, cont'd.

- Sometimes incontinence results from:
  - Intestinal, rectal, and reproductive system surgeries
  - A physical illness
- If incontinence is a new problem, tell the nurse at once.
- Incontinence is embarrassing.
- The person is uncomfortable.
- Skin irritation, infection, and pressure ulcers are risks.
- Falling is a risk.
- The person's pride, dignity, and self-esteem are affected.

# Urinary Continence, cont'd.

- Social isolation, loss of independence, and depression are common.
- Promoting normal urinary elimination prevents incontinence in some people.
- Some need bladder training.
- Sometimes catheters are needed.
- Incontinence products help keep the person dry.
- Incontinence is beyond the person's control.
  - If you find you are becoming short-tempered, talk to the nurse at once.

# Applying Incontinence Products

- Incontinence products help keep the person dry.
  - They usually have 2 layers and a waterproof back.

# Catheters

- A catheter is a tube used to drain or inject fluid through a body opening.
  - Inserted through the urethra into the bladder, a urinary catheter drains urine.
  - An indwelling catheter (retention or Foley catheter) is left in the bladder.
- Catheterization is the process of inserting a catheter.

# Catheters, cont'd.

- Catheters are used:
  - By persons too weak or disabled to use the bedpan, urinal, commode, or toilet
  - To protect wounds and pressure ulcers from contact with urine
  - To allow hourly urinary output measurements
  - As a last resort for incontinence
    - Catheters do not treat the cause of incontinence.
- Persons with catheters are at high risk for infection.

# Drainage Systems

- A closed drainage system is used for indwelling catheters.
  - Nothing can enter the system from the catheter to the drainage bag.
  - The urinary system is sterile.
- The drainage system has tubing and a drainage bag.
  - The bag hangs from the bed frame, chair, or wheelchair. It must not touch the floor.
  - The bag is always kept lower than the person's bladder.

# Drainage Systems, cont'd.

- If the drainage system is disconnected accidentally, tell the nurse at once.
  - Do not touch the ends of the catheter or tubing.
  - Practice hand hygiene. Put on gloves.
  - Wipe the end of the tube with an antiseptic wipe.
  - Wipe the end of the catheter with another antiseptic wipe.
  - Do not put the ends down.
    - Do not touch the ends after you clean them.
  - Connect the tubing to the catheter.
  - Discard the wipes into a biohazard bag.
  - Remove the gloves. Practice hand hygiene.

# Drainage Systems, cont'd.

- Condom catheters (external catheters, Texas catheters, urinary sheaths)
  - Condom catheters are often used for incontinent men.
  - A condom catheter is a soft sheath that slides over the penis.
  - Condom catheters are changed daily after perineal care.
  - To apply a condom catheter:
    - Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
    - Thoroughly wash the penis with soap and water.
    - Dry the penis before applying the catheter.
  - Never use adhesive tape to secure catheters.

# Bladder Training

- Bladder training helps some persons with urinary incontinence.
- Some persons need bladder training after indwelling catheter removal.
  - Control of urination is the goal.
- You assist with bladder training as directed by the nurse and the care plan.