

Master Catheter Care for CNA Testing

Eliminate provider confusion and prevent CAUTI. This skill generates more testing confusion than any other procedure - our checklist covers all provider differences and critical safety protocols.

Why Students Fail This Skill

"I failed catheter care because I didn't clean the labia - my textbook never mentioned this!" Provider differences cause unnecessary failures. Know YOUR specific requirements before test day.

Test Day Success Strategy

"Verbalize everything you do on the test. Narrate what you're doing the whole time." This advice saves students by showing evaluators your systematic approach and infection control knowledge.

CAUTI Prevention Reality

Each catheter day = 3-7% infection risk. Current CDC data shows CAUTI rates varying dramatically by facility. Your technique directly prevents life-threatening infections, not just test failure.

Bag Positioning = Life or Death

Drainage bag above bladder level creates backflow and infection pathway. This demonstrates fundamental misunderstanding of infection control principles and causes automatic failure with most providers.

Critical Safety Protocol

ALWAYS hold catheter at insertion site during cleaning to prevent displacement or trauma. Tugging on catheter tubing can cause serious urethral injury and immediate test failure.

Automatic Failure Points

Never do these: Allow drainage bag above bladder level, tug on catheter tubing, contaminate sterile areas, skip gender-specific requirements for your provider, reuse contaminated washcloth sections, or miss critical safety steps.

Step 1: Hand Hygiene & Supply Gathering

- Perform thorough handwashing - soap and warm water for 20+ seconds
- Gather supplies: clean washcloths, towels, mild soap, warm water basin, clean gloves, waterproof pad
- Check water temperature - should feel comfortably warm to your wrist
- Prepare for paired handwashing evaluation (Headmaster often combines skills)

Step 2: Privacy & Patient Preparation

- Knock and introduce yourself professionally
- Explain procedure: "I'm going to provide catheter care to keep the area clean and prevent infection"
- Close door or draw curtains for complete privacy
- Position bed at comfortable working height with adequate lighting
- Demonstrate indirect care behaviors throughout (Prometric scores communication)

Step 3: Basic Positioning & Safety

- Place waterproof pad under patient's buttocks
- Position patient supine with knees slightly bent
- Don clean gloves before any catheter or genital area contact
- Hold catheter near meatus to prevent tugging or displacement

Step 4: Female Patient Specific Steps

- Clean labia front-to-back before catheter tubing (Prometric requirement)
- Use separate washcloth sections for labia and catheter cleaning
- Clean catheter tubing at least 4 inches from meatus using strokes away from body
- Focus exclusively on catheter tubing - NO labia cleaning (NNAAP approach)
- Use clean washcloth section for each stroke - no reusing contaminated areas

Step 5: Male Patient Specific Steps

- Assess if patient is circumcised or uncircumcised
- For uncircumcised: gently retract foreskin using clean technique
- Clean around glans and catheter insertion site with circular motions
- Clean catheter tubing at least 4 inches from insertion site, strokes away from body
- ■ ALWAYS replace foreskin to natural position to prevent paraphimosis
- Check that urine flows freely into drainage bag (Headmaster may score this)

Step 6: Drainage System Management

- Ensure drainage bag remains BELOW bladder level at all times
- Check tubing for kinks or dependent loops that could obstruct flow
- Verify drainage bag never touches the floor (contamination risk)
- Explicitly demonstrate tubing management as scored component (Prometric emphasis)

Step 7: Documentation & Safety Verification

- Remove gloves properly by turning inside out
- Perform hand hygiene immediately after glove removal
- Leave patient in safe position with call light within reach
- Return bed to low position for safety
- Document care provided including patient response and observations
- Complete detailed technique documentation (Prometric requirement)

Step 8: Professional Communication & Reporting

- Verbalize your actions: "Now I'm cleaning away from the insertion site"
- Maintain conversational tone with patient throughout procedure
- Report any concerns immediately: cloudy urine, strong odor, blood, or patient pain
- Demonstrate systematic infection control understanding through narration

