

CONTINENCE & UROLOGY TERMINOLOGY: GLOSSARY OF USEFUL TERMS

Acute Urinary Retention	Acute urinary retention stands for the sudden inability to urinate voluntarily, despite having a full bladder.
Aseptic Non-Touch Technique	Aseptic non-touch technique (ANTT) is a type of aseptic technique that prioritises key part and key site protection during invasive medical procedures.
Atonic	This refers to weakened bladder muscles that are unable to contract to help the passing of urine. This can lead to the bladder overflowing with urine, which generally results in discomfort, pain and leaking.
Balloon	The balloon refers to an attachment at the top of the catheter that is inflated with water to keep it in place. It is positioned to sit at the base of the bladder, blocking the internal urethral opening.
Bladder	The bladder is a hollow organ, located in the lower abdomen, that stores urine. It is one of the central organs in the urinary tract system.
Bladder Capacity	Bladder capacity refers to the average amount of urine the bladder can hold. The bladder does this by expanding like a balloon. Generally, a healthy adult can hold around 500 mls of urine.
Bypassing	Bypassing refers to urine leaking out of the bladder during catheter use. Bypassing is often an indication of a blockage or kink in the catheter that is obstructing the flow of urine.
Catheter	A catheter is a long, flexible and hollow tube that is inserted into the bladder to drain the urine if a patient is having trouble doing so on their own.

Catheterisation	The process of inserting a catheter into the bladder. Depending on the type of catheter used, catheterisation can be performed by either a healthcare professional or the patient themselves.
Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection	Abbreviated as CAUTI. CAUTIs are urinary tract infections (UTIs) related to the use of catheters (particularly indwelling catheters). CAUTIs can be acquired at the point of insertion or during use. [1] Around 75% of all UTIs acquired in hospitals are associated with catheter use. [2] Prolonged use of a catheter increases your risk of developing a CAUTI.
Constipation	Constipation is when an individual has uncomfortable or infrequent bowel movements. It is normal for people to experience temporary bouts of constipation throughout their lives. This can usually be remedied by increasing fluid intake, eating a high fibre diet and exercising more. Constipation may be treated with laxatives if symptoms persist.
Continence	Continence refers to an individual's ability to control their bladder and bowels.
Cystitis	Cystitis is a type of urinary tract infection (UTI) that leads to inflammation in the bladder. Cystitis is more common in women than in men. Although cystitis can be uncomfortable, it usually heals on its own with limited intervention.
Diuretics	Diuretics are medications or substances that increase the production of urine. Diuretics are sometimes used to flush out excess fluid and sodium from the body. They are used to treat hypertension, heart failure, kidney diseases and cirrhosis.
Enuresis	Enuresis is the medical term for being unable to control urination. It is a common condition affecting children, particularly during their sleep. Enuresis is sometimes known as involuntary urination.
Faecal Incontinence	Faecal incontinence refers to an individual's inability to control their bowel movements. This may result in involuntary soiling. The condition is also known as bowel incontinence.

Female Urology	Female urology refers to a field of urology that specialises in conditions affecting the female urinary tract and pelvic area.
Fluid Intake	Refers to the amount of fluid you drink.
Functional Incontinence	Functional incontinence is when an individual is unable to reach the toilet when they feel the need to urinate.
Genitals	The name for an individual's sexual organs. They are also referred to as genitalia.
Haematuria	Haematuria refers to the presence of blood in urine.
Incontinence	Incontinence is the involuntary loss of bladder control, resulting in urine leaking. Although incontinence is a condition affecting millions of people, it is more common in women than in men. There are four main types of incontinence: stress, urgency, functional and overflow incontinence.
Indwelling Catheter	Indwelling catheters work the same way as intermittent catheters. However, they are intended to stay in place for a longer period of time. These catheters are held in place by a water-filled balloon that sits at the base of the bladder. Indwelling catheters are attached to a leg bag that collects the urine draining out of the bladder.
Intermittent Catheter	Intermittent catheters are designed for more short-term use. Unlike indwelling catheters, they are only inserted into the bladder when it needs to be drained and removed once it is empty. The end of the catheter is generally left open, allowing it to be emptied into a toilet. Sometimes these catheters are attached to a drainage bag.
Intravenous Pyelogram	Abbreviated as IVP. An IVP is an x-ray examination that checks for any problems in the urinary system. Before the x-ray, an iodinated contrast material (dye) is inserted into a patient's vein to highlight areas that are more difficult to see in x-ray photos. The examination enables radiographers to detect a range of issues, including kidney stones, tumours, an enlarged prostate and congenital abnormalities.

Kidneys	The kidneys are a pair of bean-shaped organs that form part of the urinary system. The kidneys have a complex filtration system that helps remove waste from the body. They also secrete a number of hormones that support blood pressure regulation and red cell stimulation.
Leg Bag	Leg bags are used to collect urine that passes through the catheter. They are usually held in place with a holster. They can be emptied using a tap-like attachment at the bottom of the bag.
Male Urology	Male urology refers to a field of urology that specialises in conditions affecting the male urinary tract and pelvic area.
Neurogenic Bladder	Neurogenic bladder is the name of a cluster of conditions that affect bladder control. This includes multiple sclerosis, spinal cord and brain injuries.
Night Bag	Night bags are like leg bags, except they can hold a greater volume of urine (up to 2 litres).
Nocturia	Nocturia is when an individual gets up regularly throughout the night to urinate. Nocturia is associated with sleep deprivation, exhaustion, an increased risk of falls and impaired productivity.
Overflow Incontinence	Overflow incontinence is when a patient is unable to empty their bladder completely, which leads to unintentional leaking.
Pelvic Floor	<p>Pelvic floor muscles sit at the base of the pelvis. These muscles support the bowel, bladder, uterus and vagina in some of their key functions, including urination and sexual intercourse.</p> <p>Pelvic floor muscles can weaken as we age or after events like childbirth. However, they can be strengthened by performing pelvic floor exercises.</p>
Perineum	The perineum is the area between the genitals and the anus.

Stress Incontinence	Stress incontinence is the unintentional loss of urine caused by physical stressors. This includes coughing, sneezing, laughing and physical exercise.
Suprapubic Catheter	A suprapubic catheter is a type of catheter that is inserted into the bladder via the abdomen. Suprapubic catheters are often used if a patient has a damaged urethra or is a wheelchair user who may find it difficult to self-catheterise using more conventional types of urinary catheters. It is designed to be left in place for around four to twelve weeks.
Total Incontinence	Total incontinence is when the bladder is unable to store any urine. This means that the bladder is constantly leaking urine.
Urethra	The urethra is a tube that transports urine outside of the body from the bladder.
Ureters	Ureters are muscular tubes that carry urine from the kidneys to the bladder.
Urgency Incontinence	Urgency incontinence is when the bladder leaks immediately or shortly after a strong urge to urinate is felt.
Urine	Urine is a liquid by-product produced by the kidneys to flush out excess fluid and waste from the body.
Urination	Urination is the release of urine from the body. This function removes excess fluid and waste from the body.
Urinary Tract Infection	Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are infections that affect the urinary system (i.e., kidneys, bladder and urethra). UTIs range in severity, depending on the type and how long the individual has had the infection.
Urinary Retention	Urinary retention is when a patient is unable to empty their bladder completely.
Urologist	Urologists are doctors who specialise in diagnosing and treating conditions affecting the urinary system.

References:

1. Werneburg, Glenn T. Catheter-associated Urinary Tract Infections: Current Challenges and Future Prospects. *Res Rep Urol* 2022; 14: 109-133
2. CDC. Catheter-associated Urinary Tract Infections (CAUTI). Available at: Catheter-associated Urinary Tract Infections (CAUTI) | HAI | CDC

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