Your doctor recommends that you have a catheter inserted into your abdomen (tummy area) to help manage the build up of fluid in the abdomen. This fluid is called ascites.

Your procedure (paracentesis) removes excess fluid from your abdomen. We call ascites containing cancer cells that collect in your abdomen, “malignant ascites”.

Ascites causes abdominal pain, bloating and is uncomfortable. When fluid is not drained, it leads to shortness of breath because of the pressure it places on the diaphragm.

**What can I expect during the procedure?**

We use a special “tunnelled” catheter for this procedure. This means that a thin hollow tube is inserted part way under the skin. The tunnelled catheter also has a cuff that acts as a barrier to infection and helps anchor it to the tissue under the skin. This prevents the catheter from moving.

By inserting this type of catheter, you and your health care provider will be able to drain excess fluid from your abdomen while you are at home. You do not need to return to the hospital to have a paracentesis procedure once you have this catheter in place.

**What can I expect after the procedure?**

You will have a bandage over the catheter to help keep it clean and prevent infection. On the part of the catheter that extends out from the skin, you will see a small clamp on the tube and a cap at the end of the tube. The clamp and the cap prevent ascites fluid from leaking.

**How do I manage my ascites drainage at home?**

We arrange home care nursing services through the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) to assist in your care. While you are at home, the CCAC in-home nurse will assist you to drain a certain amount of fluid every week as instructed by your doctor.

You will have extra paracentesis catheter supplies at home such as bandages, drainage tubing, drainage bags and catheter caps.

Your ascites fluid is collected in a drainage bag. The bag can hold up to 4 litres of fluid. Your doctor and nurse determine how much fluid is to be drained. The drainage bag is to be used once only with every drainage. Empty the fluid in the toilet and place the empty bag in your regular garbage.
How do I care for my catheter at home?

Keep the catheter insertion site clean and dry. When you take a shower, be sure you have a bandage that is securely covering the catheter. If the gauze pads become wet, remove the dressing and make sure to dry and clean the area around the catheter. Check with your CCAC in-home nurse if you have questions.

For more information or if you have any questions about the procedure, please speak to your CCAC in-home nurse, doctor or home care professional.

For Your Safety

Contact your nurse or doctor if you notice any of the following:

- A fever of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher
- Difficulty breathing
- Pain that does not go away even after taking pain medicine
- Abdominal (tummy) pain not caused by the procedure
- Bleeding from the exit site around the catheter
- Fluid leaking from the exit site around the catheter (gauze pads and bandages are soaked)
- Swelling of the abdomen (tummy)
- Signs of infection at the exit site such as pain, redness, swelling, warmth or foul-smelling drainage
- Blood in your urine
- Dizziness, light-headedness or fainting.