Patient Information about Nephrostomy Tube Placement
Barnes-Jewish Hospital Interventional Radiology

What is a nephrostomy tube?
- Urine is made in the kidney and flows down a small tube into the bladder.
- Sometimes urine is blocked due to kidney stones, infection, trauma or surgery.
- A nephrostomy tube can be placed to relieve a blockage.
- It is a small tube (catheter) that drains urine from the kidney.
- It can stay in place for days, months or sometimes permanently.

How is it placed?
- A doctor (Radiologist) locates your kidney with ultrasound, numbs the skin, and inserts a hollow needle.
- The tube is then guided to your kidney with a live X-ray (fluoroscopy).
- The section of the tubing outside of your skin is then connected to a drainage bag.
- The tubing is secured to your skin with a small stitch (suture) and covered with a dressing.

Before your procedure:
- It is important that you **do not eat or drink anything 6 hours before your procedure.** However, you may take your medicines with a sip of water.

When you arrive:
- A nurse will greet you, ask you to change into a gown, obtain your medical history, and place an IV in your hand or arm.
- The doctor (Radiologist) will then meet with you to review your medical history, explain the procedure, answer your questions, and have you sign the consent form.

During your procedure:
- After being safely positioned on the procedure table, a nurse will get your blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen level.
- You will be given medicine through your IV to help you relax and to relieve any pain.
- The procedure will take about 1 hour.

After your procedure:
- You will be taken to the holding area to rest for about 1 hour.
- A nurse will review the following with you and your loved ones:
  ♦ how to care for your tube
  ♦ discharge instructions
  ♦ activity restrictions
  ♦ follow up appointment

If you have any of the following:
- Swelling, bruising or drainage at the catheter site.
- Fever greater than 101.5°F for more than 24 hours.
- If your urine in the bag changes colors or smells different.
- Catheter gets pulled out (slightly or completely).

Please call the Interventional Radiology Department at 314-362-2353, Monday-Friday from 7:30am - 4:30pm.
All other times call 314-362-1242 and ask to have the Interventional Radiologist paged.