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Purple Urine Bag Syndrome: A Rare but Striking Presentation of UTI

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Purple urine bag syndrome (PUBS) is an uncommon but striking phenomenon characterised by purple discolouration of the urine drainage bag, typically occurring in patients with long-term indwelling urinary catheters. It is frequently associated with catheter-associated urinary tract infection (CAUTI) caused by indoxyl-sulfatase-producing bacteria. Patients with neurogenic bladder and prolonged catheterisation are particularly vulnerable. **Materials and methods:** We report a 62-year-old semi-dependent male with neurogenic bladder and multiple comorbidities, including heart failure with preserved ejection fraction, hypertension, and previous cerebrovascular accident. He had previously declined suprapubic catheterisation and continued on long-term urethral catheterisation. The use of a non-silicone Foley catheter and frequent delays in catheter changes further increased his risk of infection. He presented to primary care for a routine but overdue catheter change, during which the urine bag was noted to be purple. Clinical assessment, urinalysis, urine culture, and treatment response were documented. **Results:** The patient was afebrile and haemodynamically stable. Urinalysis showed leukocyte 1+, blood 1+, protein 2+, and a positive nitrite test. Catheter replacement resulted in clearer urine. Empirical oral amoxicillin-clavulanate (Augmentin) was prescribed for 14 days. Urine culture subsequently grew *Proteus mirabilis* (>100,000 CFU/mL), confirming CAUTI. Symptoms improved on follow-up without complications, and the purple discolouration resolved after catheter replacement. **Conclusion:** This case highlights PUBS as a valuable visual indicator of CAUTI in patients with neurogenic bladder and delayed catheter changes. Early recognition, timely catheter replacement, and targeted antibiotic therapy are essential to prevent complications in high-risk primary care patients.

Keywords: Neurogenic bladder; PUBS; UTI