

Clean Intermittent Catheterization (Self-Catheterization)

Information for patients and caregivers

Certain health problems can make it difficult to empty the bladder of urine. Self-catheterization involves you or your caregiver inserting a thin tube called a catheter into the bladder through the urethra (where urine exits the body).

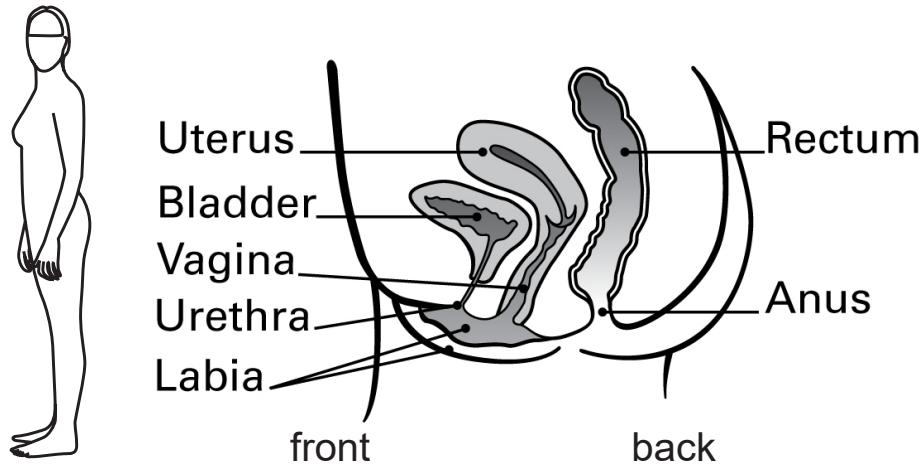
The Cystoscopy Department at Toronto General Hospital has created this brochure to help you learn how to catheterize yourself.



Patient Education

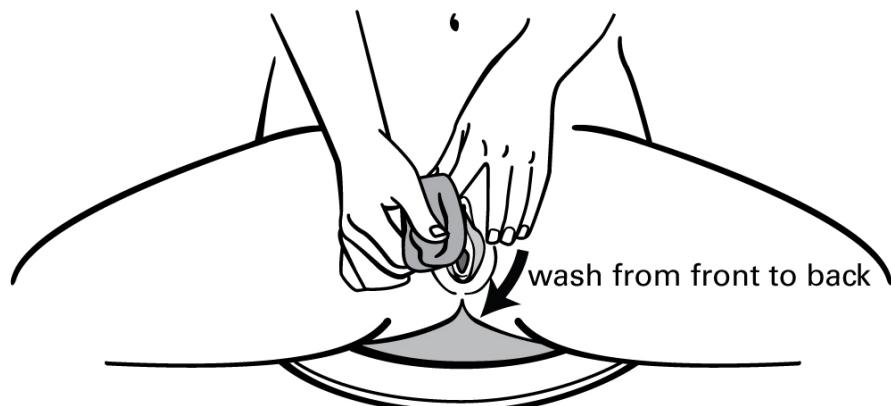


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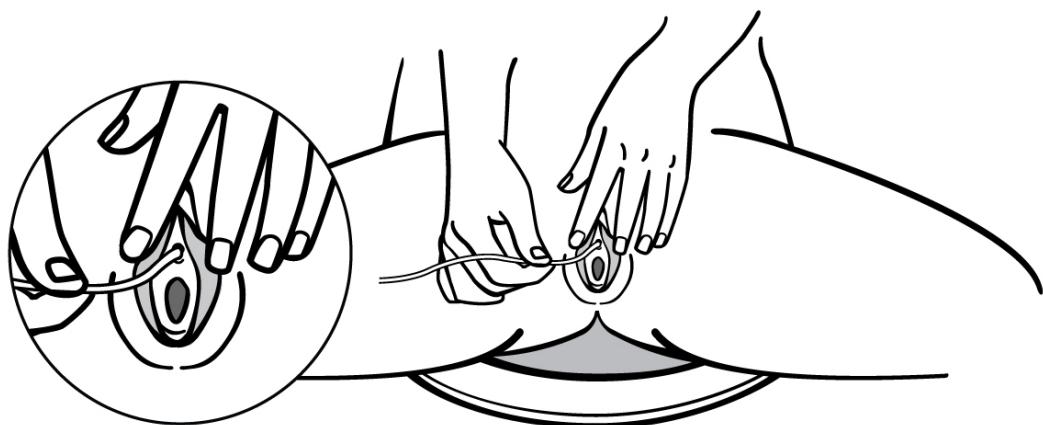


What steps do I take to catheterize myself?

1. If you are able, try and pass your urine (pee) normally before you catheterize yourself.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water.
3. Gather your supplies (mild soap, hand-held mirror, catheter and water-soluable gel).
4. Wash your genital area carefully. Take special care to wash the urethra (urinary opening where urine exits your body). Use a mild soap without perfume and water.
 - Wash the area from the front to back. Rinse thoroughly.
 - Then wash your hands well for at least 15 seconds.



5. Lubricate the tip of the catheter with a water-soluble gel (gel that dissolves in water).
6. Sit or lay down on a stable surface. Make sure you are comfortable.
7. Use your non-dominant hand to separate the labia. For example, if you are right handed, use your left hand to separate the labia.
8. Hold the catheter in your dominant hand and insert it into the urethra. Direct it upward and forward toward the belly button until you see urine draining from the catheter.



You will probably need to:

- Slide the catheter in about 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7 centimetres).
- Continue to slide in the catheter until you start to see urine draining from it.

Once you see urine draining, slide in the catheter 1 more inch (2.5 centimetres), then stop. all your urine output in the chart in this booklet. If this diary is needed for a longer time, you may want to buy a notebook.

9. Wait for all the urine to drain from the bladder.
 - Once the urine has stopped draining, slowly remove the catheter.
 - If more urine starts to drain as you are sliding out the catheter, stop and let it drain.

Tip: If you are catheterizing yourself outside your home, buy a small travelling bag to carry all your supplies.

What if I have trouble inserting the catheter?

If you have difficulty inserting the catheter:

- Try taking a couple of deep breaths and exhale slowly. This helps to relax your muscles.
- You can also try and turn the catheter as you are inserting it into the urethra.
- NEVER force the catheter.
- If you are unable to insert the catheter, call your doctor.
- It's normal to see some pink urine when you insert or remove the catheter.

Tip: If you insert the catheter into your vagina by mistake, use a clean catheter to reinsert into the urethra. Don't use the same catheter to avoid spreading germs.

How do I clean the catheter?

1. Wash the catheter in warm water using a mild soap.
2. Then, rinse it inside and out.
 - Use a catheter-tip syringe to wash, rinse and blow out the catheter with air.
 - Dry the catheter well with a clean towel or paper towel.
 - Leave the catheter open to the air to dry until next use.
 - If you are travelling and storing the catheter, place it in a paper towel inside a resealable bag. Leave the bag open to prevent condensation.
3. Throw out the catheter if you notice it is brittle or cracked.

We recommend that a catheter can be used for about 3 to 4 weeks before you should throw it away and use a new catheter.

What else should I watch for?

Drink fluids such as water to help you make urine and keep your bladder flushed.

- Drink about 6 to 8 glasses of fluids a day. Each glass should be about 8 ounces. Water is the best choice.
- Avoid foods and drinks that may irritate your bladder such as spicy foods, alcohol, colas, coffee and tea.



Look for changes in your urine.

If you see any change in colour or odour or if the urine appears cloudy, call your doctor.

Also call your doctor if you have:

- bleeding that does not stop
- sediment (sandy particles) in the urine
- back or abdominal (stomach) pain with a fever
- trouble passing the catheter
- more pain when passing the catheter than usual

When is my follow-up appointment?

We will give you a follow-up appointment to return to the Cystoscopy Department in 4 weeks.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Cystoscopy Department at 416 340 3882 and ask to speak to a nurse.

My Voiding diary

If your doctor asked you to keep a voiding diary, make sure you keep track of all your urine output. You can keep track here or in a notebook.

Record the number of times you catheterize yourself every day. Record the voided amount and the catheterized amount on this sheet. Please bring this diary with you when you come back to see your urologist.

References:

(Fellow J, Crestodina L. Home-prepared Saline: A Cost-Effective Alternative for Wound Cleansing in Home Care J WOCN November/December 2006 p 606-609)



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