



Clean Intermittent Catheterization (CIC)

This fact sheet walks you through the steps for clean intermittent catheterization (CIC). *Intermittent* means that the catheter (a small, thin tube) is not left in but is used when needed. *Clean* means that each time catheterization is completed, a new catheter is used or the catheter has been washed.¹ You can perform intermittent catheterization or a caregiver can perform the catheterization if needed.¹

Why is it necessary?

In some people, the bladder doesn't empty as completely as it should. CIC is the standard method to drain the bladder for people who are living with a neurologic condition and retain urine in the bladder.² When people cannot empty the bladder completely, it can lead to urinary tract infections (UTIs), wetting or leakage of urine, and even permanent damage to the bladder and kidneys.¹

What are the goals of CIC?

Completely empty the bladder at specific intervals. This allows the bladder to store urine for reasonable time intervals while minimizing leakage. A successful CIC regimen may be able to¹:

- Reduce wetting and leakage episodes
- Prevent further bladder or kidney damage
- Prevent urinary tract infections

How to self-catheterize

For women³

1. Assemble your equipment: catheter, lubricant, and drainage receptacle. (Figure A)
2. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. (Figure B)
3. Position yourself comfortably with thighs spread apart on the toilet or on a chair across from the toilet.
4. Locate the urethral opening. The opening is located below the clitoris and above the vagina. Clean the outer part of the vagina and the opening of the urethra. (Figure C)
5. Lubricate the catheter if needed. (Figure D)
6. With one hand, spread the labia (lips of the vagina). (Figure E)
7. Begin to gently insert the catheter into the urethral opening. Guide it in a slightly upward motion. (Figure E)
8. Once the catheter has been inserted about 2 to 3 inches past the opening of the urethra, urine will begin to flow. (Figure F)
9. Once the urine flow starts, gently push the catheter in one more inch. Hold it in place until the urine flow stops and the bladder is empty. (Figure F)
10. Slightly rotate the catheter as you remove it and stop each time more urine drains out to completely empty the bladder.
11. If the catheter is disposable, discard it right away. If it is reusable, wash and rinse the catheter completely and dry the outside. Store the catheter in a clean, dry, secure location.
12. Record the amount of urine obtained, as instructed by your healthcare provider.

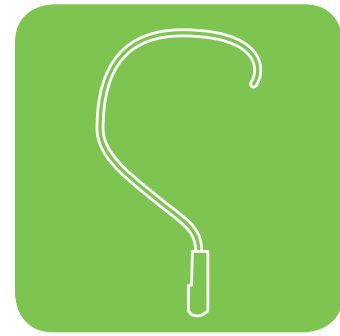


Figure A



Figure B

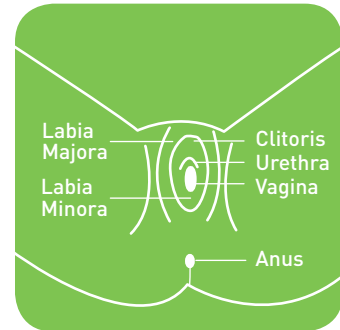


Figure C



Figure D

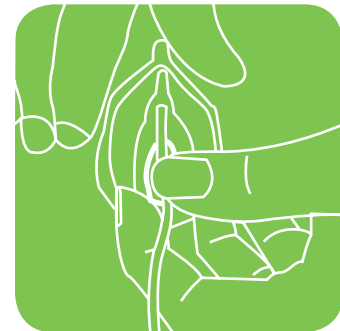


Figure E



Figure F

How to self-catheterize

For men⁴

1. Assemble your equipment: catheter, lubricant recommended by your healthcare provider, and drainage receptacle. (Figure A)
2. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. (Figure B)
3. Position yourself comfortably in front of the toilet, sitting on the toilet, or in a chair across from the toilet.
4. Clean the penis and the opening of the urethra.
5. Lubricate the catheter. (Figure C)
6. Hold the penis and begin to slowly and gently insert the catheter. (Figure D)
7. Just before the catheter goes into the bladder, you may notice some resistance. This is normal. Try to relax by deep breathing, and use gentle but firm pressure until the catheter passes this point.
8. Once the urine flow starts, gently push the catheter in one more inch. Hold it in place until the urine flow stops and the bladder is empty. (Figure E)
9. Slightly rotate the catheter as you remove it and stop each time more urine drains out to completely empty the bladder.
10. If the catheter is disposable, discard it right away. If it is reusable, wash and rinse the catheter completely and dry the outside. Store the catheter in a clean, dry, secure location.
11. Record the amount of urine obtained, as instructed by your healthcare provider.

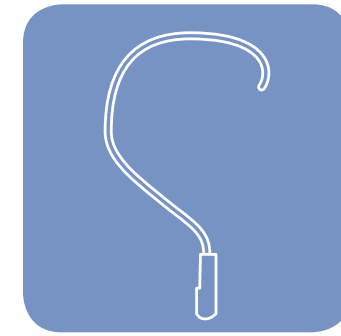


Figure A



Figure B

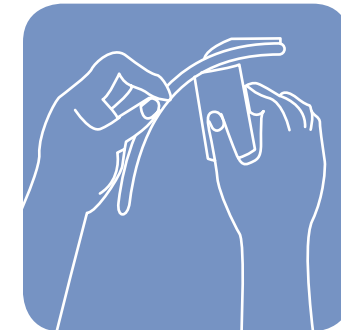


Figure C



Figure D

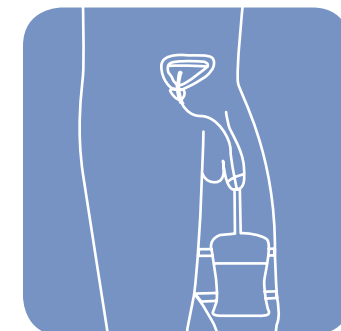


Figure E

There are many possible causes for not being able to empty your bladder completely. These include⁵:

- Blockage, such as an enlarged prostate or bladder stones
- Infections and inflammations, such as prostatitis (swelling of the prostate) or urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- Medications, including some antidepressants, oral decongestants, or anti-inflammatory drugs
- Neurologic conditions, such as spinal cord injury or multiple sclerosis
- Certain types of surgery in the pelvic area

Only your healthcare provider or urologist can determine the reason you cannot empty your bladder completely. If you are having difficulty emptying your bladder, please talk with your doctor or urologist as soon as possible so that you can get the treatment you need.

References: 1. Newman, et al. *Urol Nurs*. 2011;31(1):12-29,48. 2. Newman DK, et al. *Nurs Res*. 2004;53(6 suppl):S42-S48. 3. National Institutes of Health, Medline Plus. Self-catheterization-female. Available at: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000144.htm>. Accessed September 28, 2011. 4. National Institutes of Health, Medline Plus. Self-catheterization-male. Available at: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000143.htm>. Accessed September 28, 2011. 5. Selius BA, et al. *Am Fam Physician*. 2008;77(5):643-650.

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