

Female Self-Catheterization

Catheterization is a way to empty all the urine from your bladder. This keeps urine from sitting in your bladder. If urine sits in your bladder too long, it can cause a bladder or kidney infection. This is also called self cath.

Instructions

- Drink 8 ounces (oz.) of fluid every 1 to 2 hours during the day and limit fluids for 2 hours before bedtime.
- Catheterize yourself ____ times a day at _____.
- There should not be more than ____ oz. (____ ml.) in your bladder at one time. If you have more than ____ oz. (____ ml.), either catheterize yourself more often, or limit your fluids.

Supplies

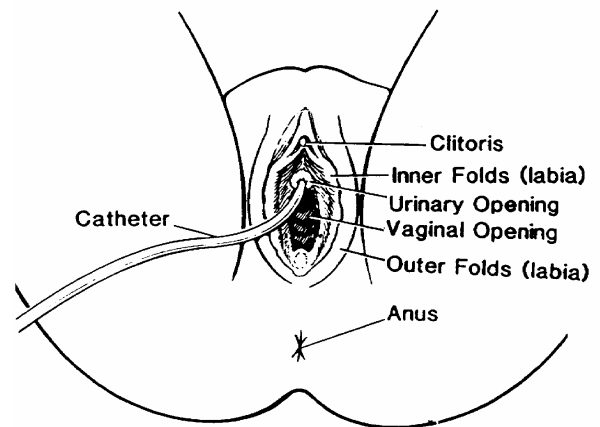
- Catheter - clear or red rubber tube. Use a **short** female catheter if you do this procedure on a toilet. Use a **long** catheter with an extension tube if you do self cath from a wheelchair.
- Water-soluble lubricant such as K-Y jelly or Surgilube. **Do not** use Vaseline.
- Urine container if needed. Use any jug, bottle or urinal which can attach to the side of a bed, chair, or wheelchair, or which can be held between your knees.

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Learn more about your health care.

Steps to Follow

1. You may catheterize yourself while sitting on the toilet, in a wheelchair, in bed or while standing.
2. Wash your hands well with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
3. Take the catheter out of the plastic bag. Put a small amount of lubricant on the tip of the catheter. Cover the tip about 2 inches up the catheter.
4. Separate the folds of the labia with your 2nd and 4th fingers. Wash the urinary opening (urethra) with soap and water.
5. Continue to separate the folds with your fingers. Find the urinary opening just above your vagina with your middle finger from the same hand.
6. Use your hand that is not holding the labia to pick up the catheter.
7. Put the catheter straight into the urinary opening next to your finger.
8. Push the catheter in about 2 to 3 inches until urine flows freely.
9. Let the urine flow into the container or the toilet. An extension tube attached to the end of your catheter will give you the extra tubing needed to reach the toilet from your wheelchair.
10. When urine stops flowing, take some deep breaths or press on your lower abdomen.
11. Slowly pull the catheter out. Continue to take deep breaths or press on your abdomen. Stop pulling the catheter out when urine starts flowing. Repeat this step until the urine completely stops.
12. Pinch the end of the catheter to keep urine from spilling on your clothes. Slowly take the catheter out.
13. Wash your hands.
14. Measure your urine 1 or 2 times a week to make sure the amounts are not greater than _____.



Catheter Care

1. Lather up your hands and wash the catheter by rubbing it between your soapy hands.
2. Rinse well with water inside and out.
3. Dry with a clean towel or tissue.
4. Lay catheter on a clean towel so the inside can air dry.
5. Store the catheter in a clean plastic bag or other clean container such as a cosmetic bag or paper towel.
6. Catheters may be reused until they become brittle, show wear, crack, or do not drain well.

When to Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor if you have any of these **signs of infection**:

- Cloudy or foul smelling urine
- Chills and / or fever
- Leaking urine in between catheterization (if this is not normal for you)
- Not feeling well, tired, weak
- Pain or tenderness across the lower back
- Increased muscle or bladder spasms (pain)
- Red or swollen urinary opening

✦ **Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.**