

Urinary Self-Catheterization Instructions

There are two main reasons for catheterizing yourself. One is to empty your bladder on a regular schedule and to keep yourself dry. Another reason is to keep your bladder from getting over-distended. This keeps your kidneys healthy and prevents infections.

- In order to have healthy kidneys and a healthy bladder, your provider will instruct you to catheterize yourself between 1 to 3 times daily.
- If you are able to urinate at all on your own, you should catheterize immediately after you urinate if possible. This allows you to measure your *post-void residual*.
- If you find that your post-void residual is consistently *less than* 4 to 6 ounces or 100 cc's, you may be able to catheterize less often. Call our office or ask one of our physician assistants (PAs) for further advice.
- If you find that your post-void residual is consistently *more than* 4 to 6 ounces or 100 cc's, you may need to catheterize more often. Call our office or ask one of our PAs for further advice.

What you need (equipment)

1. Mirror with a stand
2. Catheter tube
3. Antiseptic towelettes
4. Container to collect urine
5. Water-soluble lubricant (such as K-Y Gel)
6. Liquid antibacterial soap for soaking catheters.

What to do

1. Have all equipment ready for use.
2. Urinate on a collection container, and record this volume.
3. Wash your hands well with soap and water.
4. Select the most comfortable position for doing this task. Place a mirror so that you can see.
5. Using your non-dominant hand, hold open the labial folds so you can clearly see your urethra.
6. Grab with antiseptic towelette with your dominant hand, and wipe your vagina from front to back. Use the other side of the towelette to clean a second time, also wiping front to back.

7. Continue to hold the labial folds open. Use your dominant hand to hold the catheter at least 2 inches from the tip. Dip the catheter tip into your water-based lubricant.
8. Gently insert the catheter into the urethral opening. Use the mirror to help you visualize the location.
9. Make sure the end of the catheter is placed over a container to collect the urine.
10. Insert the catheter until urine comes out. Keep it in place until your bladder is completely empty. Record this volume.
11. Remove the catheter and dry the area. Wash the catheter with antibacterial soap and water and allow it to air dry.

Care and storage of catheter

1. No one should handle the catheter except you or the person who will be doing your catheterizations.
2. These techniques are not sterile. However, good hand washing before and after the procedure and cleaning the equipment is very important.

Other things to know

1. Your health care practitioner will tell you how often to catheterize yourself.
2. You will be shown how to keep a record of the amounts of urine if this is needed.

When to call your health care practitioner

1. Cloudy, foul smelling urine.
2. Fever (temperature over 100.4°F. or 38°C.) or chills.
3. Burning when passing your urine.
4. Blood in your urine, or passage of blood clots

If you have any questions or concerns during office hours, call the PAs at **(617) 732-4838** and **press #2**. If you are having difficulty and the office is closed, please call the office and press #0 and you will be connected with the Partners Paging System. The page operator will contact the provider on call.