



Bladder & Bowel Community

Bladder and Bowel Community Product Information

Intermittent Catheters

Intermittent catheters are hollow tubes used to drain urine from the bladder. They are inserted at intervals throughout the day, or when you feel the need to go to the toilet. Once the urine has drained out, the catheter is removed. This is called intermittent self-catheterisation (ISC). Most catheters for ISC are used once and then thrown away. Some are designed to be cleaned and reused.

There are three main types:

- **Plain catheters** are made of plastic and have to be used with a special lubricant before insertion.
- **Coated catheters** have a hydrophilic coating. The catheter is soaked in water for a short while before use. The water makes the coating become slippery so it is easy to insert.
- **Pre-lubricated catheters** are plain catheters which come packed with lubricant so they are ready to use.

How do I self-catheterise?

Many people find it easy to self-catheterise after a time, although it is generally a bit awkward to start with and needs lots of practice before you become an expert. Before use, all catheters should be stored in a dry area, lying flat and straight.

If the packaging is damaged, do not use the catheter. You should be taught how to insert the catheter by a health professional – this can be done in a hospital, clinic or at home.

You have to ensure that your vulva area (between your legs) or the area around the tip of the penis, if you are a man, is clean. It may be that a daily shower or bath is sufficient but when you go out it is useful to keep a small pack of baby wipes in your handbag or pocket to enable you to ensure the area is clean. It is very important to wash your hands before touching or inserting the catheter – again you may choose to use a fresh baby wipe if there is no wash hand basin in the toilet. Once you have washed your hands, do not touch anything else except your catheter.

Most catheters have a sticky back patch which allows you to open it and stick it on the wall, making it easier to access when you are ready to insert it into the urethra. For women there are several ways to catheterise yourself – you can learn to insert the catheter while sitting on the toilet or in your wheelchair, when standing or by putting one foot up onto the toilet seat to enable you to locate your urethra more easily. You can experiment and decide which way feels most comfortable.

When you are ready take the catheter by the drainage end from the packaging and gently push the other end into your urethra. If you are a woman and find it hard to locate your urethra, try using a mirror to see where your urine comes out. Once you have done this several times you will probably not need a mirror. You can do it over the bath if it's easier. When the catheter has reached the bladder, urine will drain from it. Make sure all the urine has drained from your bladder before removing it.

To remove the catheter, gently twist it and pull down. Don't worry if it doesn't come out first time. Try again, continuing to pull gently.

Catheters that are designed to be used more than once should be cleaned after each use with soap and water, dried with a clean tissue and kept in a sealed plastic bag or container.

If I self-catheterise, will I be more likely to get an infection?

It is important to wash your hands when possible before inserting your catheter to help reduce the risk of infection. If this isn't possible, there are catheters available that require minimal handling, helping to cut the risk of infection.

You might also benefit from drinking cranberry juice. Cranberry juice helps to line the bladder making it harder for any infection to thrive. But note that people with diabetes, as well as people taking Warfarin (blood thinning medication), should consult their doctor before drinking cranberry juice. Anyone who has Interstitial Cystitis or related bladder diseases should also avoid cranberry juice.

How can I use ISC safely when away from home?

If it is likely that good toilet facilities won't always be available when you are away, you might like to try a different type of catheter – e.g. one that is self-lubricating, or one that needs minimal handling (see above). There is also an intermittent catheter with its own drainage bag attached, making it ideal for use when no toilets are available.

I have poor eyesight and find it difficult to handle a catheter. What can I do?

You need to have good control of your hands because it can be a fiddle and you should have reasonable eyesight so you can see what you are doing. But, there are special devices available to help you if you find it hard to handle a catheter. There are also catheters available that have a mirror attached to them so you can see what you're doing more easily, without having to hold a mirror in your other hand.

"I have been using ISC for 11 years now and I can't believe how it has helped me to get my life back. Without it I would be wet all the time and not be able to travel abroad and lead an active and full life."

"I look at my catheters as my little friends that go everywhere with me."

Please contact your continence advisor or urology nurse before using intermittent catheters.

If you need the number of your local continence advisor, please call B&BC on 01926 357220
Address: B&BC, The Bladder and Bowel Community, 7 The Court, Holywell Business Park,
Northfield Road, Southam, CV47 0FS.

Website: www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org Email: help@bladderandbowelfoundation.org

Products Available

B&BC aims to provide up-to-date and accurate product information. No liability is accepted for any errors in the information presented. B&BC endorses neither the companies nor the products listed here.

The following information has been provided by the companies listed. If you would like any further details on any of the products please contact the company direct.

B Braun Medical Ltd Tel: 0114 2259000 Fax: 0114 2259123
 Thorncliffe Park, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S35 2PW
 Emerald Prescription Service (For home delivery and samples): 0800 163007
 Website: www.bbraun.co.uk Email: info@bbmuk@bbraun.com

Product	Description	Availability
Actreen Glyc Cath	Innovative single use catheter, pre-lubricated with glycerin and water gel. Available in Nelaton & Tiemann tip, CH08-18, male and female/paediatric. Made of PVC (DEHP free) and available on prescription	Comes in sizes 45cm and 20cm
Actreen Glyc Set	Innovative single use, catheter set with integrated collection bag, pre-lubricated with glycerin and water gel. Available in Nelaton & Tiemann tip, CH08-18, male and female/paediatric. Made of PVC (DEHP free) and available on prescription	Lengths 50cm and 25cm
Actreen Glyc Luer Lock	Innovative single use, intravesical catheter with luer lock, pre-lubricated with glycerin and water gel. Made of PVC (DEHP free) and available on prescription	Come in sizes 45cm and 20cm
Actreen Mini Cath	Single use, female catheter, pre-lubricated with glycerin and water gel. Discreet and easy to open and use. TPO catheter (PVC free and DEHP free), available on prescription. Size CH10-14.	Length 9cm
Actreen Lite Cath	Innovative single use catheter, pre-lubricated with glycerin and water gel. Easy to open and use, Available in Nelaton & Tiemann tip, CH08-18, male and female/paediatric. Made of PVC (DEHP free) and available on prescription	Lengths 20cm and 45cm
Actreen Mini Set	Single use, female catheter set with integral collection bag, pre-lubricated with glycerin and water gel. Discreet and easy to open and use. TPO catheter (PVC free and DEHP free), available on prescription. Size CH10-14.	Length 9cm
Actreen Hi-Lite Cath	Easy to open packaging. Single use catheter, pre-lubricated with glycerin and water gel. Foldable and handy carry pouch for discreet catheterisation. Made of TPO and available on prescription. Available in Nelaton & Tiemann tip, male and female/paediatric, CH06-16.	Lengths 41cm and 20cm

Coloplast Ltd Tel: 01733 392000 Website: www.coloplast.co.uk
 Peterborough Business Park Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE2 6FX

Product code	Material	Description
Easicath	Hydrophillic coated catheter, available in 3 lengths.Made of PVP and available via prescription.	Come in sizes 20, 30 & 40cm
Speedicath	Ready to use catheter, available in 3 lengths.Made of PU and is available on prescription.	Comes in sizes 20, 30 & 40cm
Speedicath Compact	Discreet ready to use coated catheter.Made of PU and is available on prescription.	Comes in 1 size, 7cm

Great Bear Healthcare Tel: 029 2074 7770

1 Lambourne Crescent, Cardiff Business Park, Cardiff CF14 5GF

Email: mail@gbhl.co.uk Website: www.greatbearhealthcare.co.uk

Product	Description	Size
Cub Cath Intermittent Range	1:cubCATH AVPO6 2:cubCATH AVPO8 3:cubCATH AVP10 4:cubCATH AVFO8 5:cubCATH AVF10 6:cubCATH AVF12 7:CubCATH AVF14 8:cubCATH AVM10 9:cubCATH AVM12 10:cubCATH AVM14 11:cubCATH AVM16 All have a rounded catheter tip. 30 Second Hydration, Hydrophilic coated and sterile catheter for single use ISC Available on prescription.	Come in length 18, 30 and 40cm

Teleflex Medical: Grosvenor House, Horseshoe Crescent, Old Town, Beaconsfield HP9 1LJ

Tel: 01494 53 27 61 Website: www.teleflex.com

Product	Description	Size
Liquick Base Male	Intermittent catheter available in box of 60.	10ch, 12ch, 14ch, 16ch
Liquick Base Female	Intermittent catheters available in box of 60.	6ch, 8ch, 10ch, 12ch, 14ch
Liquick Base Tiemann Tip	Intermittent catheters available in box of 60.	12ch, 14ch, 16ch
Mobile SL Male	Mobile SL - Gel lubricated, Ergothan tip intermittent catheters. Available in box of 60.	10ch, 12ch, 14ch, 16ch
Mobile SL Female	Mobile SL - Gel lubricated, Ergothian tip intermittent catheters. Available in box of 60.	8ch, 10ch, 12ch, 14ch
Mobile SL Tiemann Tip	Mobile SL - Gel lubricated, Ergothian tip intermittent catheters. Available in box of 60.	12ch, 14ch
Liquick PLUS Male	LIQUICK PLUS - intermittent catheter, hydrophilic coating, 0.9% saline pouch, Ergothan tip and integral collection bag. 30 in a box.	12ch, 14ch, 16ch
Liquick PLUS Female	LIQUICK PLUS - Intermittent catheter, hydrophilic coating, 0.9% saline pouch, Ergothan tip and integral collection bag. 30 in a box.	10ch
SafetyCat Male	SAFETY CAT - Uncoated intermittent catheter - Ergothan tip. Box of 50.	10ch, 12ch, 14ch, 16ch
SafetyCat Female	SAFETY CAT - Uncoated intermittent catheter - Ergothan tip. Box of 50	10ch, 12ch, 14ch, 16ch
MobiLoc Male	MOBILOC - Intermittent catheter with luer lock connector, Ergothan tip. Box of 60.	12ch, 14ch
MobiLoc Female	MOBILOC - intermittent catheter with luer lock connector, Ergothan tip. Box of 50.	14ch
MobiStom Male Ergothan	MOBISTOM - intermittent catheter with gel lubricant, Ergothan tip. Box of 60.	14ch, 16ch, 18ch
MobiStom Male	MOBISTOM - intermittent catheter with gel lubricant,	14ch

Tiemann	Ergothan tip. Box of 60.	
MobiStom Male Nelaton	MOBISTOM - intermittent catheter with gel lubricant, Ergothan tip. Box of 50.	14ch
Flocath quick Male	FLOCATH QUICK - Intermittent catheter, nelaton tip, hydrohilic coating, 0.9% saline pouch. Box of 30.	8ch, 10ch, 12ch, 14ch, 16ch, 18ch, 20ch
Flocath quick Female	FLOCATH QUICK - Intermittent catheter, nelaton tip, hydrohilic coating, 0.9% saline pouch. Box of 30	8ch, 10ch, 12ch, 14ch, 16ch, 18ch, 20ch
Liquick PURE	Shorter length female length catheter for intermittent self-catheterisation. Hydrophilic coating, 0.9% saline activation solution. Box of 30.	08Ch, 10Ch, 12Ch and 14Ch Nelaton and Ergothan tips

'The Bladder and Bowel Community provides information and support for people with bladder and bowel issues. We publish a wide range of user friendly booklets and factsheets.

For more information please call us on 01926 357220, email help@bladderandbowelfoundation.org or write to us at The Bladder and Bowel Community, 7 The Court, Holywell Business Park, Northfield Road, Southam, CV47 0FS.

www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

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