



Clean Intermittent Catheterization

A word to parents

This handout is written to help you and your child better understand how the bladder is emptied using clean intermittent catheterization (CIC). Starting a catheterization program can be a major event in the life of a family. It may feel new and overwhelming. Most parents and children have never had training with catheters, so it is normal if you feel fearful and unprepared. Your nurse will teach you step-by-step instructions for this procedure. There will be time to practice while you are in the hospital or clinic.

There is no single way to manage clean intermittent catheterization that is right for everyone. You will soon learn what works best for you and your child. Involve your child in the catheterizations at an early age. Even young children can help with some parts of using and taking care of the catheter.

When you stay positive and encourage your child it helps them accept and take part in their clean intermittent catheterization program.

What is clean intermittent catheterization?

Clean intermittent catheterization (CIC) means putting a catheter (tube) through your child's bladder opening (urethra) or Mitrofanoff channel into their bladder on a regular basis. Urine flows out of the catheter and the bladder is emptied. You will do this regularly to completely empty the bladder. CIC can be done like normal voiding. Instead of making a urine stream all on their own, your child uses a catheter. The process soon becomes routine, simple and well-accepted.

Why do intermittent catheterization?

CIC is used to help manage abnormal bladder function. It prevents your child's bladder from getting overfilled, which can lead to kidney damage. It drains the urine that stays in the bladder if the bladder isn't emptying all the way. Draining left over urine helps prevent growth of bacteria and bladder infections. CIC can also reduce wetting accidents. For school age children, being dry gives them self-confidence and helps them lead more active lives.

How to do clean intermittent catheterization

What equipment do I need to gather?

- Catheter

Size _____

Type _____

- Skin cleanser
 - Use soft soap and cotton balls, a wash cloth or baby wipes.
 - If your child is getting urinary infections, use an antiseptic wipe, like Betadine.
- Non-latex gloves
 - Using clean gloves for catheterization is optional for families, but may be required for school personnel.
 - Gloves are not needed if your child is inserting their catheter on their own.
- Container for urine
 - If your child cannot catheterize on their own on or near a toilet, use a urinal, jar or plastic container to catch the urine.
 - Longer catheters or extension tubing are available to make emptying easier.

You will also need lubricant and a catheter container if you are not using a hydrophilic catheter. (Hydrophilic catheters come with lubricant and are used only one time. Then you throw them away.)

- Lubricant
 - Use a water soluble lubricant, such as Surgilube. Oil-based lubricants (like Vaseline) will break down the rubber or plastic of the catheter.
 - Save money by buying lubricant in large tubes or containers.
- Catheter container
 - Use a container like a toothbrush holder, compact case, plastic wrap or baggy.
 - Dry the catheters completely before storing. Avoid airtight containers. Moisture can allow bacteria to grow.

How do I clean the catheter?

If you are not using a hydrophilic catheter, you will need to clean and disinfect the catheter right after each use.

- To clean the catheter:
 1. Wash the catheter with mild soap and water.
 2. Rinse it well, letting water flow through the catheter.
- To disinfect the catheter:
 1. Soak the catheter in one of the following for 30 minutes:
 - Betadine (2 parts Betadine to 1 part water)
 - Hydrogen Peroxide 0.6%
 - Bleach (1 part bleach to 4 parts water)
 2. After soaking for 30 minutes, rinse the catheter well with water.
 3. Shake off excess water or use a syringe of air to push the water out.
 4. Let the catheter dry completely for 24 hours before reusing or storing.
 5. Store the catheter in a clean, dry container.

When do I need to replace the catheter?

If your child is using a hydrophilic catheter, throw it away after one use.

If your child is using a reusable catheter, replace the catheter when it becomes brittle, loses its shape, becomes cloudy, or if your child gets an infection.

Increase the catheter size as your child grows to make emptying complete and quick.

How do we manage away from home?

Keep extra supplies at school in case your child has an emergency or forgets. Also keep emergency travel kits in work bags, purses and the car. Make kits with individually packaged wipes, lubricant and clean catheters in baggies. Then you can put the baggies in a make-up or travel bag, fanny pack or backpack.

Have a catheter with you at all times!

To Learn More

- Urology
206-987-2509
- Ask your child’s nurse
or doctor
- www.seattlechildrens.org

**Free Interpreter
Services**

- In the hospital, ask
your child’s nurse.
- From outside the
hospital, call the
toll-free Family
Interpreting Line
1-866-583-1527.
Tell the interpreter
the name or extension
you need.
- For Deaf and hard of
hearing callers
206-987-2280 (TTY).

Catheterization plan for your child

Catheterization schedule

Catheter name

Brand

Size

Other supplies

Where can I buy catheters and supplies?

We will give you a small amount of catheters and supplies after training. You will need to get more supplies before you run out. It’s a good idea to plan ahead. Products are available through local drug stores, medical suppliers, Children’s Home Care Services or area hospitals.

Supplier phone number: _____

Seattle Children’s offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children’s will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children’s. However, your child’s needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child’s healthcare provider.

© 1996, 2003, 2008, 2010 Seattle Children’s, Seattle, Washington. All rights reserved.