Clean Intermittent Catheterization (CIC) for Females

What it is:
Clean intermittent catheterization (CIC) is a clean, but non-sterile, way to put a rubber or plastic tube (catheter) into the urinary opening (urethra) to release urine and empty the bladder.

Why it is done:
Some medical conditions make people unable to control urination. When urine remains in the bladder for a long time, bacteria can grow rapidly. CIC helps prevent urinary tract infections by emptying the bladder completely and keeping the over-full bladder from stretching. When CIC is done every three to six hours, the bladder will not over-fill. This will prevent dribbling and wetting. CIC can help children be normally active and have a better self-image, by helping them stay dry.

Where it is done:
You can do CIC in any regular toilet facility or private area. You may sit or lie down. Consider your comfort when you choose a place for CIC.
The urinary system:
The kidney filters waste products from the whole body. Waste goes into the urine. Urine drains into the bladder, and is stored there until it leaves the body. When urine drains well into the bladder, the kidney is protected from infection.

When to catheterize:

To drain the urine well and prevent infection, do CIC regularly.

Catheterize the first thing in the morning and at your bedtime, unless the doctor wants it to be done at other times.

Your doctor will tell you how often to catheterize. Write the times you need to be catheterized here:

☐ first thing in the morning
☐ every _____ hours during the day
☐ when I go to bed
☐ other times: _______________________________________

If you have your last drink two hours before bedtime, it will help you stay dry through the night.

Catheters come in many sizes.
Here are the sizes used by most people in an age group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Catheter Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>newborns</td>
<td>5 French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infants</td>
<td>8 French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toddlers and young school-aged</td>
<td>10 French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preteens</td>
<td>12 French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adolescents</td>
<td>14 French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>older adolescents and adults</td>
<td>16 French</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To prevent infections:
To prevent infections, drink lots of fluids, wash your hands carefully before and after catheterization, keep supplies clean and keep the area around the urinary opening clean.

How to do a Clean Intermittent Catheterization

What you need:

☐ catheter, size ______ French  
☐ something to keep the catheter in, like a toothbrush holder or clean plastic bag  
☐ soap and water, soap towelettes or cotton balls with soap  
☐ urine container  
☐ water-soluble lubricant (like K-Y Jelly)

What to do:

1. Have all the supplies you need near and ready to use.

2. Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. Dry them with a clean towel.

3. Get into position for catheterization.

4. Arrange your clothes so they don’t get wet.

5. Put some water-soluble lubricant on the first two inches of the catheter. Spread it on with either your finger or a clean tissue.

6. Find the urinary opening. You may use a mirror in the beginning. Once you learn where the opening is, you won’t need a mirror to find it.
7. Separate and hold the labia open with your fingers. Use the towelettes or soapy cotton balls to wash around the urinary opening (urethra). Wash three times, from front to back, once down each side and once down the middle of the labia. Use a clean towelette or cotton ball each time.

8. Put the urine container in place to catch the urine, or sit on the toilet.

9. Gently slide the catheter into the urinary opening until urine starts to flow. Never force the tube. If you have trouble passing the tube, stop and call your doctor.

10. Let all the urine flow out, either into the urine container or the toilet.

11. Bear down a few times with the catheter still in place. This helps to empty all the urine from the bladder.

12. Slowly start to take out the catheter. If urine starts to flow again, stop until the flow of urine stops.

13. Pinch the catheter, and keep it pinched while you take it out. This keeps urine from flowing back into the bladder.

14. After you take out the catheter, wipe across the urinary opening with a towelette or toilet paper. This will prevent odors.

15. Return your clothing to its normal position.

16. Wash the catheter with soap and water. Rinse the inside of the catheter with clear water, than dry it and put it back in the clean, dry container.

17. If you used a urine container, empty it in a toilet. Wash and dry the container.
18. Wash and dry your hands.

19. If your doctor wants you to keep records, write down the time, amount of urine, and what it looked like.

**Problem-Solving**

- If urine leaks around the catheter, use a larger catheter.

- If the tip of the catheter will not slide into the urinary opening, don’t force it. Try using a smaller-sized catheter.

- **Bleeding** from the urinary opening can be caused by injury during the catheterization. If this occurs, stop the catheterization and call your doctor.

- **Trouble passing the catheter** can be caused by a tight muscle (*increased sphincter tone*) due to anxiety or spasm. Check the catheter placement. If it is in the vagina, use a clean catheter and try again. If you still cannot pass the catheter, call your doctor.

- **No urine on catheterization** may mean the catheter is not in the right place. Check the placement of the catheter.

- **Call your doctor if you see signs of a urinary tract infection:**
  - cloudy urine
  - mucus
  - color changes in urine
  - fever
  - bladder spasms
  - pain or tenderness over lower back
  - blood
  - urine has foul odor
  - increased wetting
  - chills
  - rash

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Care of the Catheter

What you need:

- Catheter
- Something to keep the catheter in, like a toothbrush holder or clean plastic bag
- Soap
- A 10 mL syringe
- Vinegar
- Tap water
- A clean container for vinegar water

What to do:

- Wash and rinse the catheter well between each catheterization. Let it dry before you store it in a clean container.

- Once a day, clean the catheter with soap and water, then rinse it with vinegar water. The vinegar water will help prevent crystals from forming in and on the catheter.
  1. Mix one-half cup of vinegar with one-half cup of clean tap water in a clean container.
  2. Rinse the outside of the catheter with the vinegar water, then use the syringe to squirt some through the opening of the catheter to rinse out the inside.
  3. Throw out the vinegar water when you are done. Do not reuse it.

- Every night, let the catheter air dry on a clean surface.

- Every night, wash the container you use to store and carry the catheter. Use soap and water, and let it air dry. If you use a plastic sandwich bag to store the catheter, use a new bag each day.

- One catheter can last one to three months. If the catheter becomes too soiled to use, or becomes hard to put in, throw it out and use another one.
• Bring the catheter and supplies everywhere you go. Stay on the catheterization schedule to avoid infections, dribbling and wetting.

Now that you’ve read this:

☐ yes  ☐ no  See the handout: Latex Allergy

☐ Show your nurse or doctor how you catheterize yourself.
   (Check when done.)

☐ Tell your nurse or doctor how you will keep the catheter clean.
   (Check when done.)

☐ Tell your nurse or doctor when you need to call the doctor’s office.
   (Check when done.)

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If you have any questions or concerns,

☐ call your child’s doctor or  ☐ call ______________________
Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.
Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you say this handout is easy to read? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading this handout? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any questions about the subject? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what?
Is there anything you don’t like about the drawings?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

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Thank you for helping us!