



Urology Consultants, Ltd.

Center for Continence Care and Pelvic Medicine

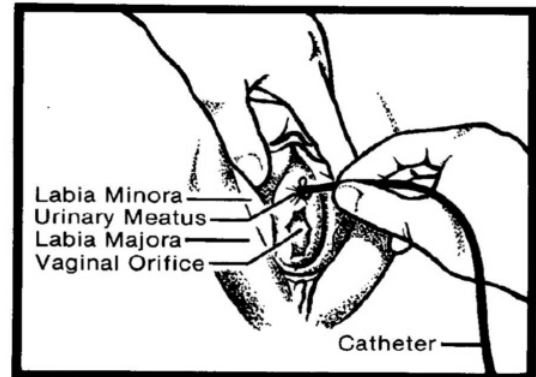
SELF-CATHETERIZATION FOR WOMEN

Equipment

1. 14 or 16 French catheter
2. Soap and water and moist towelette
3. Container for collecting urine (if toilet not available)
4. Water soluble lubricant like KY jelly or generic equivalent (your pharmacist can help) **Do not use petroleum jelly or Vaseline**

Procedure

- Wash your hands and genitals with soap and water or moist towelette (if possible, but do not delay if not available).
- Sit far back on the toilet with legs spread, or stand with one foot on the toilet seat.
- Lubricate the end of the catheter.
- Use your nondominant hand to separate the labia
- Until you are used to the technique you will need to locate the urinary meatus by using a mirror or by feeling for the clitoris and using it as a landmark. The urinary meatus is just below the clitoris.
- Holding on to the last several inches of the catheter with you other hand, *gently and slowly* advance the lubricated catheter tip into your bladder, angling it slightly upward toward your head.
- Once urine begins to flow, advance the catheter about another inch. Wait for the urine to stop.
- Slowly pull the catheter back an inch and you may get additional urine (from the lower part of the bladder). When all urine is drained, remove the catheter slowly.
- Wash, rise and dry the catheter then place it back in a clean dry plastic bag or storage container.
- Have the catheter with you at all times: home, work, school. *It is more important to catheterize on schedule than to worry about catheter cleanliness.* A quick rinse with soap and water will do in an emergency.



Helpful Hints

- The catheter can be used multiple times. Replace it if the rubber cracks or it becomes too soft to insert.
- Drink normal amounts of fluids. Don't try to limit you fluid intake so you won't have to catheterize!
- Cutting back on drinking after 7pm usually helps people sleep through the night without needing to catheterize.
- It is important to know if your doctor sends your urine for culture you will have bacteria in your bladder. This often represents *colonization* rather than *infection*. If you have foul smelling urine, bloody urine, or fevers this may be an infection and require treatment.