

Making Intermittent Catheterization Work for You¹

When you start using an intermittent catheter, there's lots to think about. This guide covers some things you might like to consider or discuss with your healthcare professional.

Getting the most out of your first appointment

At your first appointment, your healthcare professional will teach you how to catheterize and discuss your options.

- **Consider having a carer or support person with you**, such as a friend or family member or, if helpful, a translator
- **Share any cultural or religious requirements** that might affect you using a catheter
- **Express any worries or concerns** you have with your healthcare professional. They might know something that's helped other people similar to you

During your appointment, you can ask your healthcare professional about different positions to catheterize in. Some people find it comfortable to sit up, others to lie on their back with a leg spreader, or someone to assist.



Equipment that can help

A wide range of assistive devices exist to help you hold the catheter or to help you insert it more easily. Some examples include

- **a step stool or 'L-shaped' support** to hold your legs in the right position
- **tools to help undo and do up buttons** or keep your clothes out of the way
- **devices to hold the catheter** and/or your genitals while you insert the catheter (e.g., labial separators, penis holders, 'eagle boards' that rest on your legs, or L-shaped handles that allow you to sit up more)
- **a mirror or light source** to help you see your genitals
- **something to help keep your thighs apart** during the process
- **weighted gloves** to help if you have tremors or unsteady hands



Guiding the way to confident living with intermittent catheterization

Choosing a catheter

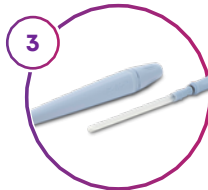
Here are some things to consider. It's important to try **different options** and to know that you can **choose more than one** catheter to suit different day-to-day scenarios.



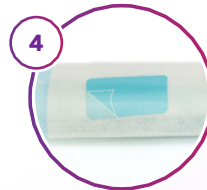
1 Compact catheters. Discreetly carry your catheter in your pocket or bag.



2 Packaging designs. 'Easy grip' may make it easier for you to open or hold your catheter especially if you have difficulty using your hands.



3 Convenience. Some catheters are designed to be easy to dispose of or have a reduced environmental impact.



4 Adhesive patches. Allow you to hang the package on a surface to free your hands.

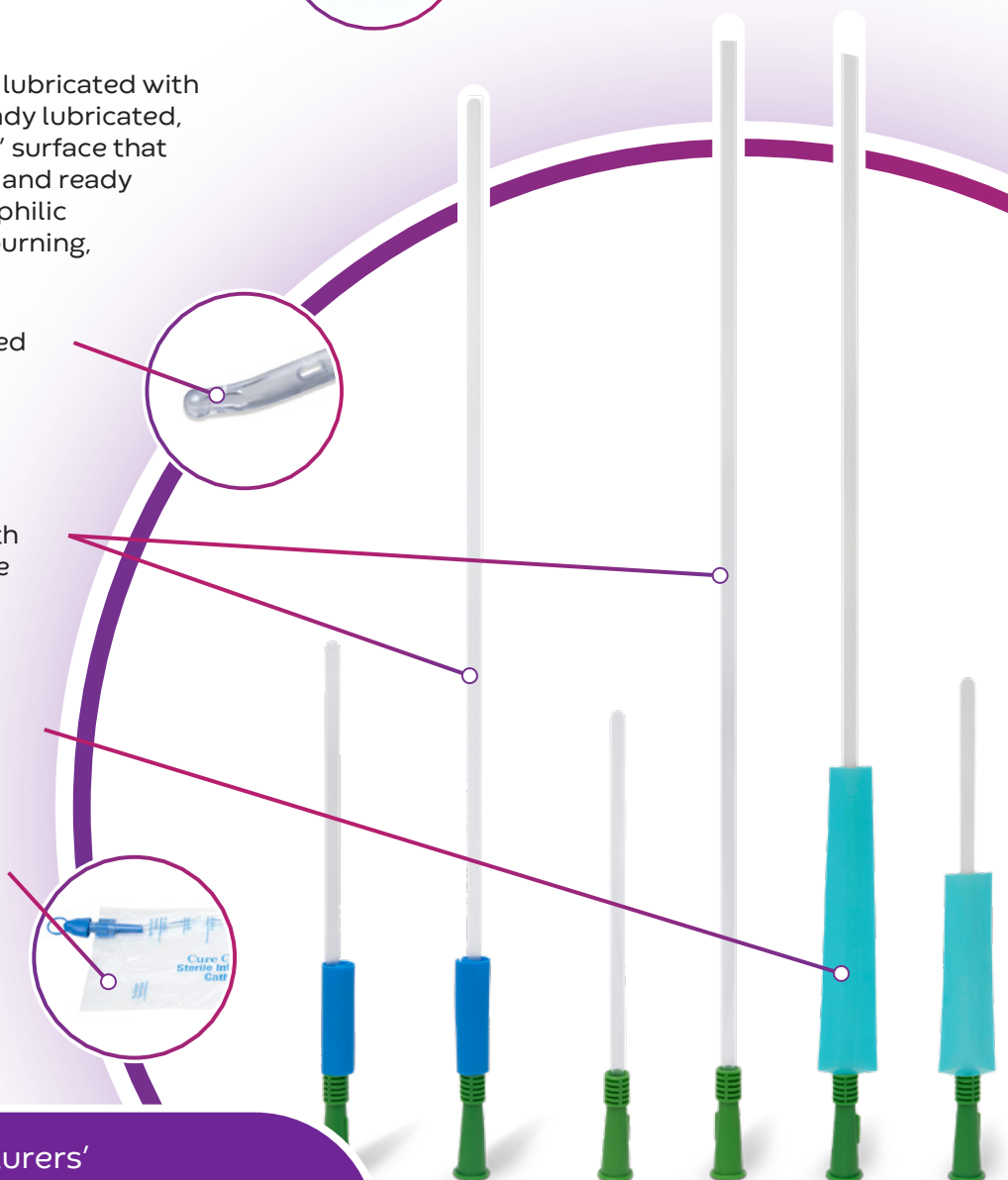
5 Lubrication. Some have to be lubricated with gel by hand, others come already lubricated, and others have a 'hydrophilic' surface that makes them instantly slippery and ready to use. Consider using a hydrophilic catheter if other types cause burning, pain, or discomfort.

6 Different catheter tips. Curved (Coudé) tips can help advance catheters through urethras with strictures or obstructions.

7 Catheter length. Longer-length catheters can help you reach the toilet basin or urine collector, especially for those who use wheelchairs.

8 No-touch handling sleeves. Fully encased catheters can make it easier to handle.

9 Closed system catheters. This catheter type can make catheterizing outside of a bathroom (e.g., in a car or while traveling) easier or more sanitary.



Remember to follow manufacturers' recommendations for each catheter. Store catheters in a **clean, dry, and temperature-controlled environment.**



Confident catheterization in your day-to-day life

Learning how to make catheterization work for you doesn't stop at your first appointment. When in doubt about any of the below, please seek advice from a healthcare professional.



Ongoing support

You can ask to schedule a routine follow-up with your healthcare professional to talk about how your catheter/s are working for you and how to use them most easily, and to see if you'd like to try different options, including devices and techniques. This is especially important if you have a medical condition that's likely to change over time.



Skincare

If you have sore or sensitive skin, seek advice on products and their application, such as moisturizers or topical estrogen (for female users).



Tips for keeping your routine

Why not set alarms as reminders to catheterize to stay on schedule? Some people find a catheterization diary helpful to stay on track.



Changing your catheterization frequency

Speak to your healthcare professional if you feel you might need to change how often you catheterize. Some reasons include

- medications that can cause dry mouth and lead you to drink more
- you pass more than 400-500 mL of urine in one catheterization
- you're experiencing leaking, bladder spasms, or bladder pain and discomfort between catheterizations
- you start to be able to urinate without using a catheter
- some treatments, such as treatments for overactive bladder (e.g., Botulinum toxin treatments)



Tips for traveling

Having easy to carry cleansing wipes, hand sanitizer, and extra supplies and clothing can be useful for when an appropriate bathroom is not available.

For extended stays, locate a local supplier of catheters. Check for toilet-access services (such as keys, apps, or cards) that allow you to use accessible toilets or staff toilets, or that show where all accessible toilets are.

Scan for additional resources and access to Convatec me+ Continence Care support or visit qr.convatec.com/cc-meplus



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