Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Self-Catheterization for Males

This information explains how to insert your catheter to drain your urine (pee).

A catheter is a flexible tube that drains urine from your bladder. You'll insert your catheter yourself by placing it into your urethra (the small tube that carries urine from your bladder to outside your body), which is in your penis. Your catheter will drain your urine.

How to self-catheterize

Most people insert their catheters in the bathroom, letting the urine drain into the toilet. You'll get a container to collect your urine in case you need to insert your catheter somewhere else.

Follow these instructions to help you insert your catheter:

1. Clean your hands.
    - If you're washing your hands with soap and water, wet your hands, apply soap, rub them together thoroughly for at least 20 seconds, then rinse. Dry your hands with a disposable towel, and use that same towel to turn off the faucet.
    - If you're using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, cover all of your hands with it, rubbing them together until they're dry.
2. Gather your supplies on a clean surface. You'll need:
    - Your catheter
    - Water-based lubricant (such as K-Y Jelly®)
    - Paper towels
    - A container to collect your urine if you're not able to catheterize in a

bathroom.

3. Clean your penis with soap and water or a baby wipe. Make sure to dry the tip of your penis completely before catheterizing.
4. Stand in front of or sit on a toilet. You can also insert your catheter in a private room using a container to collect your urine. Don't insert your catheter while standing in the shower.
5. Apply lubricant on the tip of the catheter. Hold the catheter in your dominant hand (the hand you write with).
6. With your other hand, hold your penis. Aim your penis upward towards your abdomen (belly). Make sure to stand over a toilet or a container to catch the urine that will flow from the catheter.
7. Insert the catheter slowly and gently into your penis. Push the catheter in until you see urine flowing from the catheter. To be safe, push it in another inch once you see urine flowing to make sure it's fully inside your bladder.
8. Hold the catheter in place until the urine flow stops.
9. Slowly take the catheter out of your penis. The catheter may drain some more urine on its way out so continue to stand over the toilet. If you see urine draining out, stop pulling out the catheter and let the urine finish draining. Then, continue to take the catheter out.
10. If you're going to reuse your catheter, clean it with soap and water. Let it air dry on a clean surface. Once it's dry, store the catheter in a clean place covered with a paper towel or in a zip lock bag. If you're not going to reuse your catheter, you can throw it away.
11. Clean your hands following the instructions in step 1.

Remember to always carry an extra catheter with you in case of an emergency.

After your self-catheterization

- Your penis may feel irritated after you catheterize. This is normal.
- You may have some bleeding during or after your catheterization.
    - Your urine may turn light pink due to this blood, so drink some water.

This will flush your bladder.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider if you have:

- A fever of 101 °F (38.3 °C) or higher.
- Chills.
- Pelvic pain.
- Pain on the sides of your body by your ribs.
- Trouble inserting or removing the catheter.
- Nausea (feeling like you're going to throw up).
- Vomiting (throwing up).
- Any questions or concerns.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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