

FACT SHEET

The Ins & Outs of Intermittent Catheterisation

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Following a continence assessment you may be recommended to perform intermittent catheterisation by your healthcare professional. The number of times you will be required to intermittently catheterise may vary and is dependent on the function of your bladder. Some may be required to only catheterise once to twice per day and spontaneously void the rest of the time, whilst others are completely dependent on intermittent catheterisation to empty their bladder.

Your healthcare professional will teach you how to intermittently catheterise, advise you on the frequency of catheterisation and how to balance this with your fluid intake to avoid over distension of the bladder. Depending on your bladder function your healthcare professional may also prescribe medication to assist with the management of your bladder. Some of the medication may cause a dry mouth, certain chewing gums, mouthwash and toothpaste may assist in reducing the effect of a dry mouth.

The aim of intermittent catheterisation is to protect your urinary system and to prevent or minimise complications.

Intermittent catheterisation is a procedure that can be performed in a number of settings and should in no way limit the person to the home environment. A big part of ensuring a successful bladder management program through the use of intermittent catheterisation is to ensure it is compatible with the person's lifestyle.

The same intermittent catheter will not suit everyone; likewise the same intermittent catheter will not suit every situation.

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Some may use one type of intermittent catheter at home and another when they are out. Some intermittent catheters will assist in reducing discomfort associated with passing the intermittent catheter, whilst others may adopt a non touch device, some are pre-lubricated and others have an attached collection device. The strength and the tip of intermittent catheters will also vary. Cost may also influence the choice in intermittent catheter selection. When considering reusing an intermittent catheter it is important to note not all intermittent catheters are registered for reuse and this has a lot to do with how their composition reacts with cleaning techniques.

Within the last few years there have been a number of advancements in intermittent catheter technology. Your healthcare professional will advise you on the most appropriate intermittent catheter to suit your individual needs and how to use and care for that intermittent catheter.

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