

Self-catheterisation tip sheet



Most common challenges when using a catheter for ISC (intermittent self-catheterisation)

Some of you might feel uneasy when you are about to get started with catheterisation. But don't worry. Most people get over and past that feeling as soon as they have tried it a few times and it soon becomes a part of their daily routine.

Each person has their own unique condition and there is not just one answer on how to learn to perform Intermittent Self-Catheterisation (ISC) the best way, but there are some common tips and tricks.

Insertion difficulties

Men may have difficulties inserting the catheter through tense sphincter muscles or past the prostate.

Women may also struggle to find the right entering point.

Tip: Try to relax, take some deep breaths and give a slight cough when you insert the catheter. You can also try to twist the catheter a little bit to get through.

There are also catheters with a tapered tip, that could simplify the insertion. Training is the key to success!

Tip: You may find it difficult finding the right entering point, and women may find this particularly difficult. If you feel comfortable you could ask your partner to help you, or try assistance aids, like a mirror, a handle or a leg spread.

Removal difficulties

Catheters that are used with gel or other lubricant are slippery during insertion but might lose their slipperiness on the way out. If you are just starting to use catheters or have a limited hand function, it could be a bit time consuming to empty your bladder, and there is a risk that the catheter may dry out before it is time to remove it.

Tip: Ask for a hydrophilic catheter that is slippery both on insertion and withdrawal. Try to relax. Coughing, or rotating the catheter, may help.

Limited hand function

If you have limited hand function it might be difficult to manage the catheter. If this is the case, the following tips might be of use:

Tip: Look for a catheter that is easy to handle. A "hydrophilic" catheter activates with water, and so called "wet catheters" come with water in the package, so you don't need to add gel or other lubricant.