



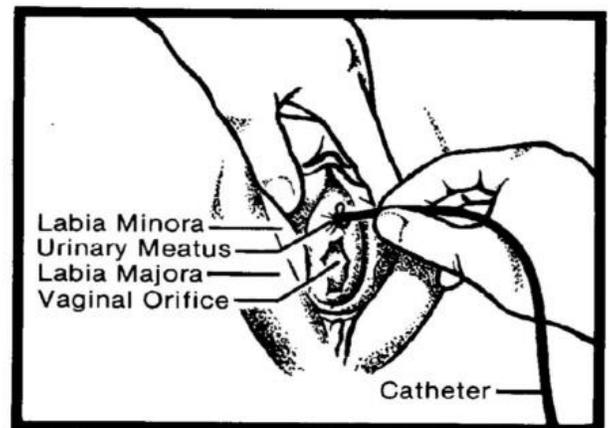
Self-Catheterization for Women

Equipment

- 14 or 16 French catheter
- Soap and water and/or moist towelette
- Container for collecting urine (if toilet not available)
- 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.
- 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 non-dominant 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 your 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. When all urine is drained, remove the catheter slowly.
- Wash, rinse and dry the catheter then place it back in a 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 your 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.