



Is Intermittent Self-Catheterization the Right Choice for You?

A Decision Aid

**The Canadian Association
for Enterostomal Therapy**

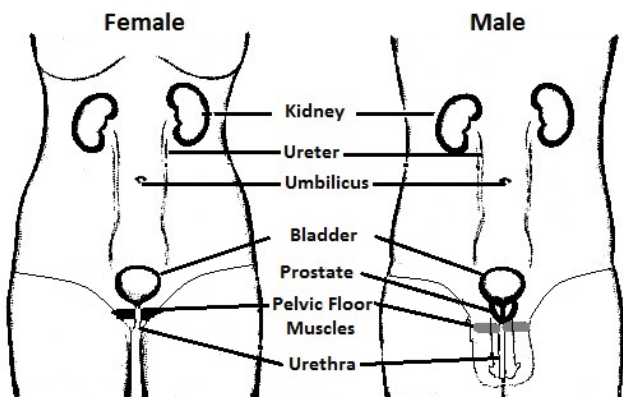
**Association Canadienne
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**www.caet.ca
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Is Intermittent Self-Catheterization the Right Choice For You?

Self-catheterization is one way to treat urine retention. A thin flexible tube called a catheter is passed through your urethra into your bladder. The urine is then drained into the toilet or container before the catheter is removed. When this is done several times a day it is called intermittent self-catheterization. We will refer to it as self-catheterization in this pamphlet. Your doctor or nurse will have discussed this with you and will teach you how to do self-catheterization if it is your treatment choice.

The Urinary System



Urine is made by the kidneys. It flows from the kidneys into the bladder through two tubes called the ureters. It leaves the bladder through another tube called the urethra.

This pamphlet will help you decide if self-catheterization is right for you. If you need more information about urine retention and other people's experiences go to www.caet.ca.

How do your bladder problems affect you?

The statements below will help you think about how your bladder problems affect your life. Write your answer on the line provided. Your total score will be between 0 and 24. The higher the score, the more your bladder symptoms are affecting you.

Never = 0 Often = 3
Rarely = 1 Always = 4
Sometimes = 2

Because of my bladder problems...	Score
I stay at home.	_____
I need to wear a pad.	_____
My skin is red and sore.	_____
My sleep is interrupted.	_____
I have had bladder infections.	_____
I avoid intimacy.	_____
My total score is	_____ /24

Are bladder problems affecting any other areas of your life that are not mentioned here?

Self-Catheterization

Advantages

- You get to plan when and where to empty your bladder (4-6 times a day);
- Bladder and kidney damage will be prevented;
- Urine infections will be decreased;
- Urine leakage will be controlled, reducing skin problems, smell and the need for pads;
- Frequent need to pass urine will stop;
- There is no need for any tubes or bags between catheterizations (unlike when using a Foley or indwelling catheter);
- Doing self-catheterization before going to bed and first thing in the morning may allow for a better sleep.

Disadvantages

- You may find it hard to insert the catheter;
- You will have an ongoing cost for supplies;
- All bathrooms may not be suitable for doing self-catheterization;
- You could still get a bladder infection.

Making your decision...

Now that you have looked at how this problem is affecting your life, and the advantages and disadvantages of self-catheterization, the following questions can help you decide if self-catheterization is the right choice for you.

Please discuss these with your doctor or nurse.

Question	Comments
Do I know why self-catheterization has been suggested as an option for me?	
Will self-catheterization help me?	
Will I be able to self-catheterize?	
Do I understand the advantages and disadvantages of self-catheterization?	
Do I have enough information and support to make a decision?	
Is there anything else that I need to know?	
Do I want to learn self-catheterization?	

The above questions are based on the Sure Test
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This pamphlet was created to help you make a decision about a treatment for urinary retention. It is not intended to be used without the advice of your healthcare or medical provider.