

Let's Talk About...

Clean Intermittent Catheterization for Girls

What is clean intermittent catheterization?

Clean intermittent catheterization (CIC) is a way to drain urine from the bladder. This is done by putting a catheter (which looks like a small straw) into your child's bladder to drain the urine. The catheter is removed when the bladder is empty. This can prevent some medical problems and can help keep your child continent (dry).

Why does my child need CIC?

The kidneys and bladder are part of your child's urinary system. The kidneys make urine by filtering the blood and eliminating what the body no longer needs as waste. The urine is sent from the kidneys to the bladder. The bladder is a muscle that holds and empties urine from the body. If the bladder is not able to empty the urine from the body your child may need clean intermittent catheterization (CIC). There are many different causes for this problem. Sometimes a child will only need catheterization for a short period of time, while other children will always require catheterization. It is important to follow the doctor's instructions for catheterization so your child's kidneys can remain healthy.

How will I know how to do CIC?

A nurse will demonstrate and teach you CIC. At first you may feel very nervous or clumsy performing this procedure. This is very normal and you won't feel nervous or clumsy after practice. Many families worry that it is a painful procedure and they could injure their child. This is not usually the case. A case manager will help you figure out how to get the supplies you will need for cathing.

How often do I do CIC?

How often you perform CIC depends on your child's age and the reason your child needs catheterization. The doctor or nurse will explain the schedule. Initially you will do CIC about every 3–4 hours.

The frequency of catheterization also depends on how much fluid your child drinks. The goal is to prevent the volume of urine in your child's bladder from causing damage to the kidneys. As you and your child learn how to space fluids throughout the day (Fluid Spacing), the frequency of catheterization at night can decrease.

While the amount of fluids your child drinks will affect how often you perform CIC, it is important to never restrict fluids to keep your child dry. It is necessary to keep the body well hydrated for kidney and bladder health. Your doctor or nurse will explain how much fluid your child needs each day.

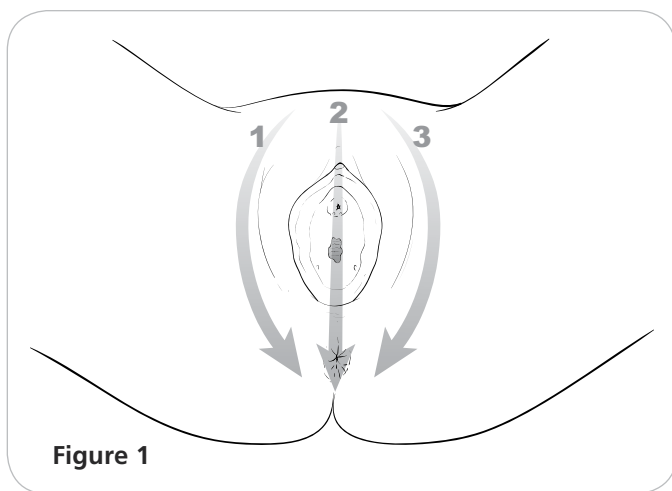
What medications does my child need?

Your child may be on several medications as part of the CIC program. Some medications help your child stay dry between catheterizations while other medications may relax the bladder so it will hold more urine and decrease bladder spasms which can cause leaking. It is important to take the medications as ordered and communicate with the doctor about how the medications are affecting your child's bladder control to make this program a success.

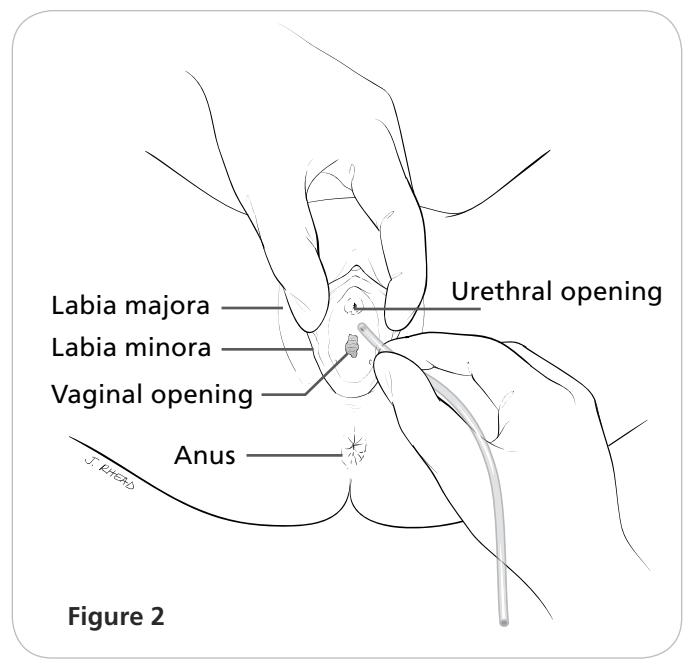
How do I do CIC?

- 1 Gather the equipment you will need and place in an area where you can reach the equipment and not lose your or your child's balance. These are the supplies you will need:
 - Catheter
 - Water-soluble lubricant (such as KY Jelly®; do not use Vaseline®)
 - Cleaning wipes (“baby” wipes are fine)
 - Container in which to drain urine if you can't drain the urine into a toilet
 - Storage bag to store equipment in between catheterization times (makeup case, fanny pack or something similar)

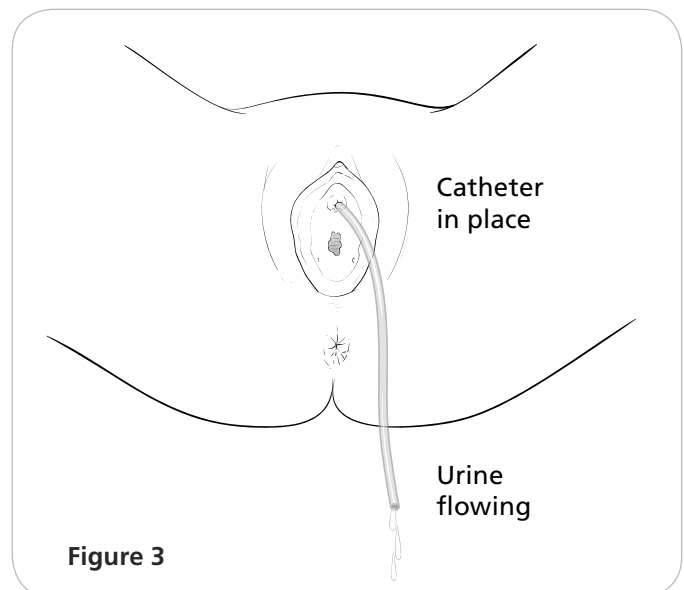
- 2 Wash your hands well with soap and water. You don't need to wear gloves, even though medical personnel (nurses, aides) must wear gloves. If you do use gloves, make certain the gloves are non-latex.
- 3 Position your child as comfortably as possible. Depending on your child's age and balancing ability, have her lie down with knees bent in a "frog-like" position or sit her on the toilet with her legs spread apart. Talk with your child and reassure her. Depending on her age, explain the procedure as you do it.
- 4 Lubricate 2 inches of the catheter with KY Jelly or some other water-soluble lubricant.
- 5 Separate the labia with the thumb and forefinger of one hand. Wash the area thoroughly with a cleansing wipe or towelette with the other hand. Always clean from top to bottom, never from side to side. Use a new wipe with each stroke to avoid spreading germs. Examine the area for any changes in appearance (swelling, redness, discharge). Locate the urethra (opening). (See Figure 1)



- 6 Using one hand to keep the labia separated, gently insert the catheter into the urethral opening with your other hand (See Figure 2). Make certain you insert the rounded end with the small holes. Position the other end of catheter so it will drain into the toilet or a container.



- 7 When the catheter enters the bladder, urine will start to flow (See Figure 3). Advance the catheter another half inch.



- 8 When urine stops flowing, slowly start to take the catheter out, turning it as it comes out. Usually, more urine will flow. Stop each time more urine flows so that the bladder empties completely. Unless recommended by the doctor or nurse, do not press down on your child's stomach to help "push" out the urine.
- 9 Wash and dry your hands.
- 10 Collect all the supplies and put them back in the storage bag.

- 11 If you were told to fill out a flow sheet, record the amount of urine and other information on the chart.
- 12 Properly dispose of the urine.
- 13 If your child is using a multiple use catheter you will need to wash and store the catheter after use. Wash it out with soap and water. Rinse it so that the water runs through it and out the holes. Shake the catheter to get the water out of the inside. Dry the outside with a clean towel. Store the catheter in a clean, dry plastic sandwich bag. Dry the catheter completely before you seal the bag. If the catheter becomes stiff, cloudy, discolored, or too soft to insert, throw it away and use a new one. Depending on how often they are used, catheters last about a month.

Never use a single-use catheter multiple times.

School and self-catheterization

As your child develops and matures it will be important for her to learn to catheterize herself. This allows her independence and freedom. You can help your child prepare for this by involving her in the cathing process. You may have her help gather the supplies, open the supplies, and tell you the steps to follow for catheterization. The clinic nurses will help decide when and how to begin teaching her. If your child needs to be catheterized at school, you will need to talk to your child's teacher and school nurse. The clinic staff can help you set up this program.

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