



# Understanding *Urinary Tract Infections*

*A basic guide to keeping your bladder healthy*



# About this booklet

**Since our founding** in 1957, we have worked closely together with healthcare professionals and users to create products and solutions that are sensitive to their needs. This journey has given us a deep understanding of continence issues and we know that urinary tract infections (UTIs) are particularly concerning for catheter users.

In this booklet, we will answer some of the most common questions around UTIs. We have also gathered some facts and helpful advice that can help you keep your bladder healthy in order to minimise the risk of UTIs.

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*All icons are for illustration purpose only*

# Concerned about UTIs?

## You're not alone

**The precise cause** of UTIs is unclear, and while there are several practical steps you can take to reduce your risk of having one, you should always consult a healthcare professional if you get one, or if you have questions.

On the following pages you will find some good advice, grouped into three areas to give you a simple overview:

- Hygiene
- Routine & compliance
- Catheter options

**UTIs are** a common issue for many catheter users. If you have worries, or feel uncertain about how to reduce your risk of UTIs, you're not alone. Indeed, with many catheter users experiencing two or more UTIs every year, they represent a significant source of concern.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: IC user survey (Countries: US, UK, DE, NL, FR, IT), January 2016 (n=2942)

### What catheter users told us<sup>1</sup>

**81%** say not having UTIs would represent good bladder health

Users have an average of  
**2.7**  
UTIs per year



UTIs are a daily concern for  
**41%**  
of all intermittent catheter users

**45%** consider UTIs one of the greatest issues in their life

# What is a UTI?

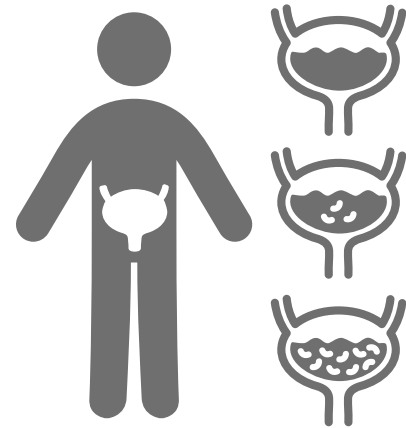
A UTI is only diagnosed when there are bacteria in the urine **and** the user is experiencing one or more of the symptoms mentioned on the next page.

In most people, urine is virtually sterile (containing little or no germs or bacteria), and the presence of bacteria in the urinary tract does not necessarily cause a UTI. If, however, the bacteria grow and multiply to a certain level, they may cause an infection of the urinary tract and may need to be treated.

Anybody can get a UTI though there is a higher risk if you are a catheter user. Women also tend to get more UTIs due to their comparatively shorter urethra (the channel through which urine is passed) which gives easier access for bacteria to enter into the bladder.



*It is important that you seek and follow the advice of your healthcare provider in the diagnosis and treatment of a UTI.*



# How can I tell if I have a UTI?

If **you have** any of the signs and symptoms<sup>1</sup> detailed below, it indicates the possibility of an infection. However you might not feel pain and bladder irritation if the nerves to your bladder are affected. Remember, a UTI will only be diagnosed when there is **also** bacteria in the urine. You should always consult your healthcare provider to confirm the diagnosis and get the appropriate treatment.



Fever/sweating



Flank pain (area below the ribs and above the pelvis)



Pain when urinating



Shivering and increased muscle spasms in the body and bladder



Increased frequency to urinate



Dark-coloured and strong-smelling urine



Increased urge to urinate



Cloudy/bloody urine

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<sup>1</sup> Grabe et al. 2015, EAU Guidelines on Urological Infections.

# Maintain good personal hygiene

UTIs may result when bacteria – perhaps left behind after improper hand washing, or present near the urethral opening – are introduced into the urinary tract when you catheterise.

That's why it's important to wash your hands with soap and water before carefully cleaning around the urethral opening or urethra before inserting your intermittent catheter.

Also, be careful how you clean yourself after urinating or after a bowel movement. Wipe from front to back so that bacteria from your anal area are not pushed into the urethral opening or urethra.

*(View the World Health Organisation hand hygiene technique at the back of this book)*



Hygiene

# Regularly empty your bladder completely

- You should empty your bladder 4-6 times a day, or as recommended by your doctor or nurse, although frequency may be affected by your diet, choice of drinks and medication.
- Check you are emptying your bladder often enough by measuring the amount of urine you drain - ideally it should be no more than 400 ml.
- Using a catheter will ensure that your bladder is completely empty, as urine left in the bladder can become stale and UTIs may develop.



*Routine and compliance*

# Establish a routine that's healthy and convenient

## Create a routine that works for you

Choose convenient times to catheterise, such as coffee breaks and around meal times, so it becomes less disruptive and part of your daily rhythm. This does not have to be the exact same time every day.

## Stay properly hydrated

Make sure you drink at least 1.5 - 2 litres of liquid a day (unless you have been advised otherwise), as this reduces the risk of UTIs. Check the urine colour chart overleaf for further guidance.

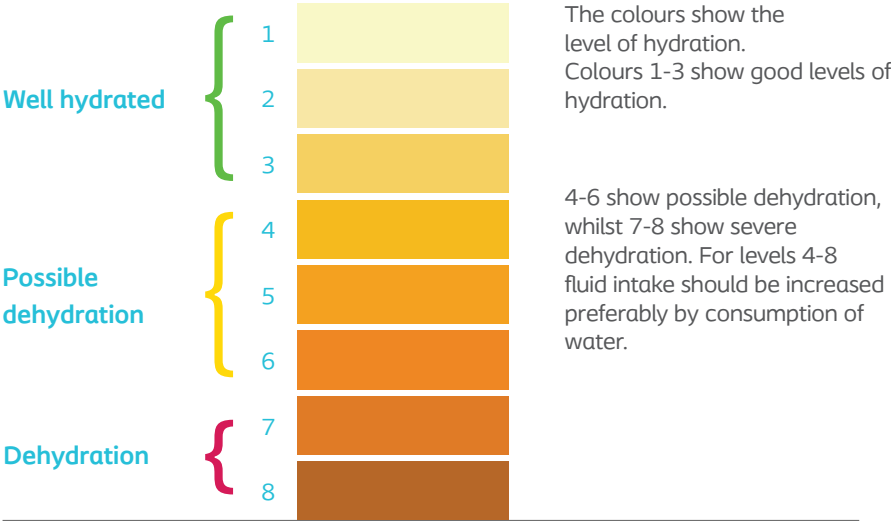


*Routine and compliance*



# Am I hydrated?

## Urine colour chart<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> 'Am I Hydrated Colour chart' adapted by A Yates / Coloplast 2017

# What do other colours of urine mean?

- **Bright yellow / discoloured urine** can be the result of taking some vitamin supplements.
  - **Dark orange / amber / brown urine** is usually a sign of dehydration but can be an indication of jaundice. Increase fluids but if it continues to persist consult your doctor.
  - **Pink to reddish urine** could be the result of recently eating certain foods especially beetroot, blueberries or rhubarb, BUT it could also be a sign of blood in the urine which requires medical advice.
  - **Some medications** can discolour the urine. You can check this out with a pharmacist or doctor.
  - **Green urine** can be caused by eating asparagus.
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# Be prepared

## Leave reserve catheters at places you go to regularly

You may want to leave some spare catheters at places where you go regularly, such as at friends' and relatives' homes, the car or your workplace. Please be careful if storing in particularly hot or cold temperatures as this may impact the feel of your catheter.

## Be prepared

You may want to do some research before going to new places. It's a good idea to check the location of public toilets to know where you will be able to catheterise. The WheelMate app helps you to find clean, accessible toilets and parking spaces when on the move, particularly helpful for wheelchair users. You can download the WheelMate app by going to:

[www.coloplast.co.uk/wheelmate](http://www.coloplast.co.uk/wheelmate)

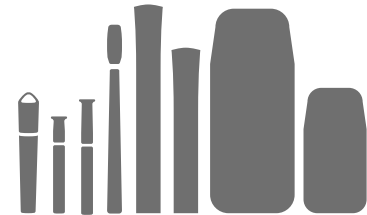


WheelMate™

# Use a sterile catheter every time you catheterise

To prevent UTIs, we recommend you use a new, sterile, well-lubricated catheter every time you catheterise.

A coated catheter (hydrophilic-coated or pre-lubricated) can help lessen friction as you insert and remove your catheter. It makes catheterisation more comfortable and convenient. Studies, data and findings also link them to lower rates of infection<sup>1,2</sup> and less urethral damage<sup>1,3,4</sup> compared with other catheters.



Catheter options

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<sup>1</sup> Cardenas et al. 2011, <sup>2</sup> De Ridder et al. 2005, <sup>3</sup> Stensballe et al. 2005, <sup>4</sup> Sutherland et al. 1996.

# Choose a catheter that suits your lifestyle

**Different lifestyles** or everyday activities sometimes require different intermittent catheterisation solutions. Catheters come in many variants: standard length catheters, compact catheters that can fit into your purse or pocket and catheter sets where a urine bag is attached to the catheter.

Finding the right catheter is a very personal choice and the best one for you might not be the first one that you try. Research shows that being satisfied with your catheter solution is very important for maintaining your schedule and thereby ensuring good bladder health<sup>1,2</sup>. That's why it is important to find the catheter solution that suits you. You might need to try different ones to find one that fits you the best.



Catheter options

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<sup>1</sup> Barbosa et al.2012, <sup>2</sup> Wyndaele JJ Spinal Cord 2002

# Remember, your overall health is important too

The advice in this booklet is intended to answer some of the most common questions you have about UTIs, and to help minimise your risk of getting one. It is also important to remember the importance of staying in good overall health. By getting enough sleep, eating healthily and exercising regularly, you will strengthen your immune system and increase your chances of preventing UTIs.



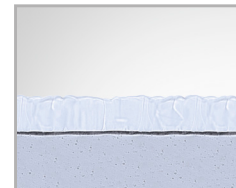
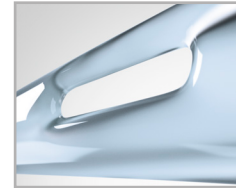
*You should always follow the specific instructions provided by your healthcare provider, and those included with your intermittent catheterisation solution. If you still suffer from frequent UTIs despite all these precautions, talk to your healthcare provider for more advice.*



# What makes SpeediCath a SpeediCath?

**SpeediCath catheters** have one thing in common – they are all designed to fit your needs. This focused dedication has helped make SpeediCath the number one catheter brand in Europe<sup>1</sup>. Every SpeediCath catheter benefits from being:

- **Ready to use** – to ensure catheterisation takes up as little time as possible our catheters are pre-lubricated so instantly ready-to-use, with no mess or fuss.
- **Easy to use** – our SpeediCath catheters are simple and intuitive to use, with features offering easy opening and designs to ensure that the catheter stays where it is placed.
- **Maximising your comfort** – our unique hydrophilic coating and polished eyelets minimise surface friction and create a soft transition, ensuring a smooth and pain free insertion and withdrawal.



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<sup>1</sup> Coloplast sales data, GERS, IMS, Assobiomedica, Nefemed, PCA, 2015/16

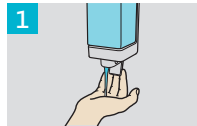
# Hand hygiene - How to wash hands

Good hand hygiene is essential in intermittent catheterisation to limit the risk of getting a UTI.

The WHO hand hygiene technique with soap and water<sup>1</sup>



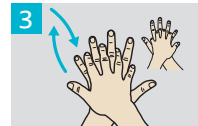
0 Wet hands with water.



1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces.



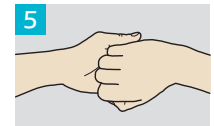
2 Rub hands palm to palm.



3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa.



4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced.



5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.



6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa.



7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.



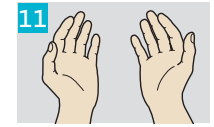
8 Rinse hands with water.



9 Dry your hands thoroughly with a clean or single use towel.



10 Use towel to turn off faucet.



11 Your hands are now clean.



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