

## Cleaning Catheters

You can use catheters over and over again. To do this safely, you must clean them well after each time they are used. Poor cleaning can lead to infections. When you need more catheters, you can get them from a local or mail order medical supply company. You will get a prescription for the catheters. Check with the clinic staff if you have questions.

### Steps to cleaning:

- 1** Wash your hands. Wash the catheter in hot water and antibacterial soap (like Dial®). The hot water will melt the lubricant and soften any dried mucus on the catheter. Slide your fingers all along the catheter to make sure it is smooth and clean.
- 2** Rinse the catheter well in warm, running water. Make sure water flows through the inside to rinse all the soap out of the catheter.
- 3** Shake the catheter to get rid of extra water. Hold the catheter upright so the water runs out of the inside.
- 4** Fill a container with 70% rubbing alcohol. Put the catheter in the container. Make sure it is completely covered with alcohol. Leave it in the alcohol until you are ready to use it.

Anti-microbial: kills germs

**Changing Your Alcohol**  
You can re-use your alcohol for 1 week as long as you keep it in a covered container. After 1 week the alcohol is too weak to kill the germs.



- 5** When you are ready to use the catheter, rinse it well with running water. Be sure to rinse the inside, too. Shake off the extra water. The catheter is now ready to use.

## Cleaning The Urine Container

Clean the urine container once each week with hot, soapy water. Rinse well. You can also put it in a dishwasher.

## Sterilizing Catheters

Your catheter must be sterilized every week. You can do this on top of the stove or in the microwave. Wash your hands. Then follow 1 of the methods below.

### Method #1: Stove Top

1. Boil water in a pan on the stove.
2. Put your catheters in the pan so they are completely covered by the water.
3. Boil the catheters for 10 minutes.

### Method #2: Microwave

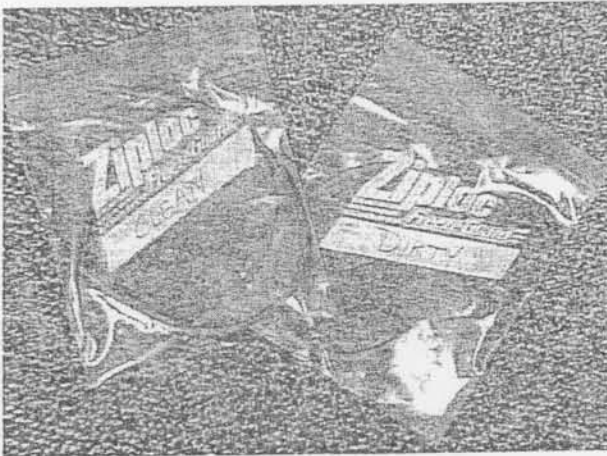
1. Put your catheters on top of a damp paper towel in the microwave.
2. Put a glass of water in the microwave. This keeps the catheters from burning or melting.
3. Microwave on high for 12 minutes.
4. Be careful when you take out the catheter. It may be hot.

## Changing Your Catheter

You will need to get new catheters at least every 6 months. It is best to mark the date on your calendar so you don't forget.

You will need to replace your catheter sooner if it:

- Cracks
- Gets stiff
- Gets too floppy
- Has any sign of damage



## Traveling With Your Catheters

The best way to carry catheters with you is in zippered bags. Use 2 separate bags to keep your clean catheters germ-free:

- One for clean catheters
- One for used catheters

Do not put used catheters in the same bag as clean ones. The used catheters will spread germs to the clean catheters.