

# Understanding intermittent catheterisation (IC)

Do you know how IC works and how it may help you in your life with multiple sclerosis?

Andrea  
Living with MS





## What is intermittent catheterisation?

Intermittent catheterisation (IC) can help if you retain urine. With IC, you periodically insert a flexible, lubricated tube into your bladder to drain the urine it cannot expel on its own.

### Why is IC important?



It is important that urine does not remain in the bladder for a prolonged period.

If urine is retained in the bladder, bacteria may develop and lead to a urinary tract infection.<sup>1</sup>

An overly filled bladder may cause kidney damage.<sup>2</sup>

With an intermittent catheter, you can manually drain your bladder and help to ensure it is fully empty when you go to the toilet.

### What are the health benefits of IC?



- Residual urine in the bladder can increase bacteria build up.<sup>3</sup> IC may help you to drain your bladder and reduce this risk.<sup>2</sup>
- Ensuring your bladder is fully drained helps reduce the risk of damage to your kidneys.<sup>2</sup>

IC is the closest you can get to normal bladder functioning: your bladder still holds your urine and you void as and when you need – just with the help of the catheter.

# Intermittent catheterisation in a nutshell



You insert an intermittent catheter through the urethra yourself.



An intermittent catheter only stays in your body for as long it takes to empty the bladder.



Intermittent catheters can be used with or without a collection bag.

## Michael's experience

Michael was initially resistant to the idea of IC until a nurse explained how not catheterising could lead to kidney damage and showed him how to do it. He now wishes he had started with catheters earlier.



*"Deciding to self-catheterise is about overcoming your fears and moving out of your comfort zone. Once you do that, the rest is easy."*

Michael | Living with MS

# How do **intermittent catheters** work?

An intermittent catheter reaches the bladder via the urethra. The length of the male urethra varies for each person, but is generally around 20cm in length.<sup>4</sup>

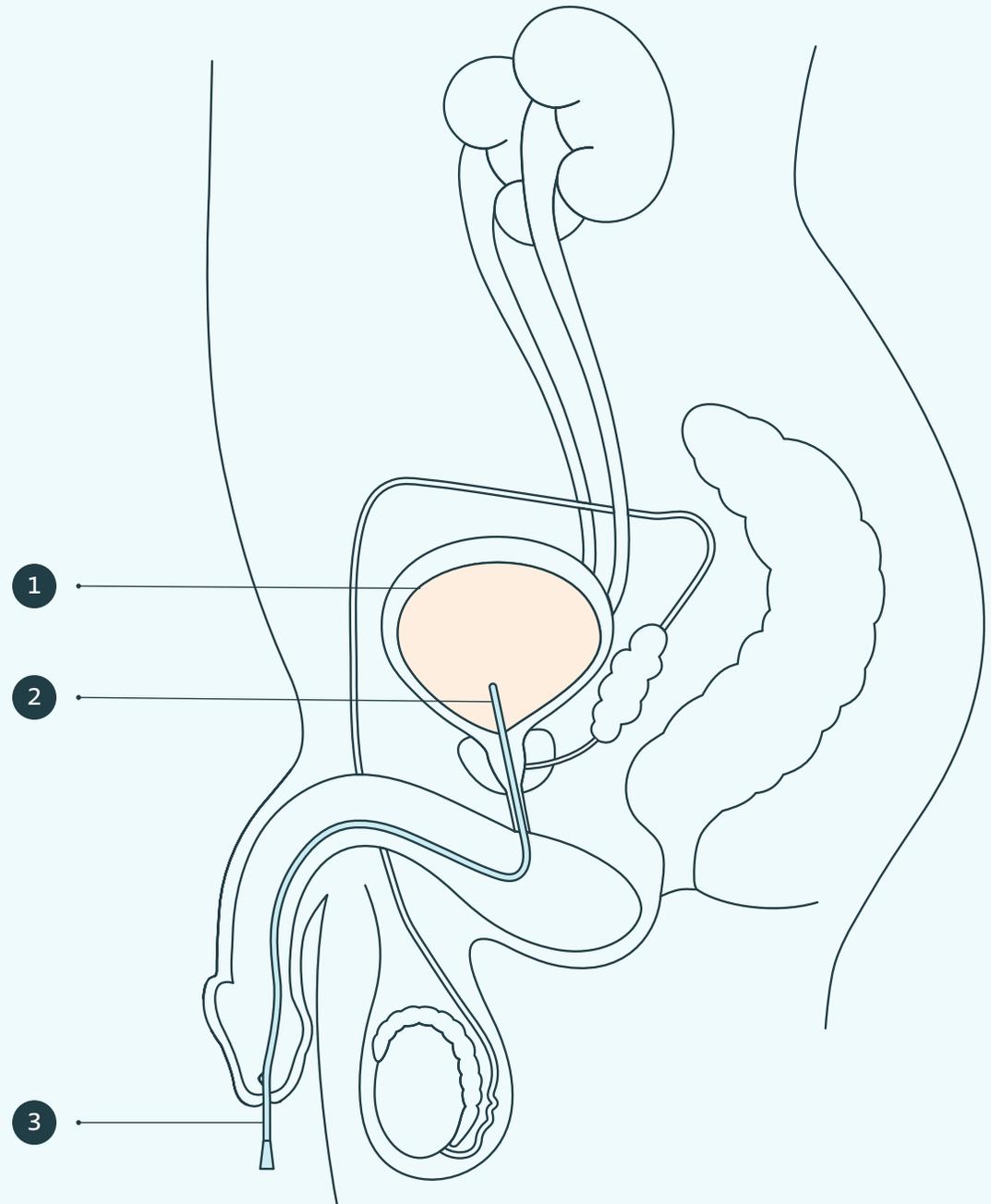
A male catheter is therefore a little longer to ensure it can reach the bladder and enable voiding.

## Draining the bladder with IC

Over time, the bladder fills with urine which needs to be drained periodically.

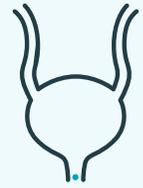
When it is time to urinate, you insert the catheter via the urethra and once reaching the bladder, urine can begin to drain.

When the flow of urine stops and the bladder is empty, the catheter can then be removed carefully and discarded.



Each intermittent catheter is used only once.

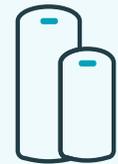
# Know **what to expect** from an intermittent catheter



You can empty  
your bladder.



You can decide when  
and where you empty  
your bladder.



You have an  
easy-to-use bladder  
management solution.



You can bring your  
products with you.

# Who is Coloplast?

Coloplast develops and manufactures innovative products that fit the lives of those with intimate healthcare needs. Working closely with those who use our products, we create solutions that are sensitive to your individual needs.

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## How can I learn more?

If you are concerned about your bladder health, reach out to your nurse or doctor for medical advice and support.

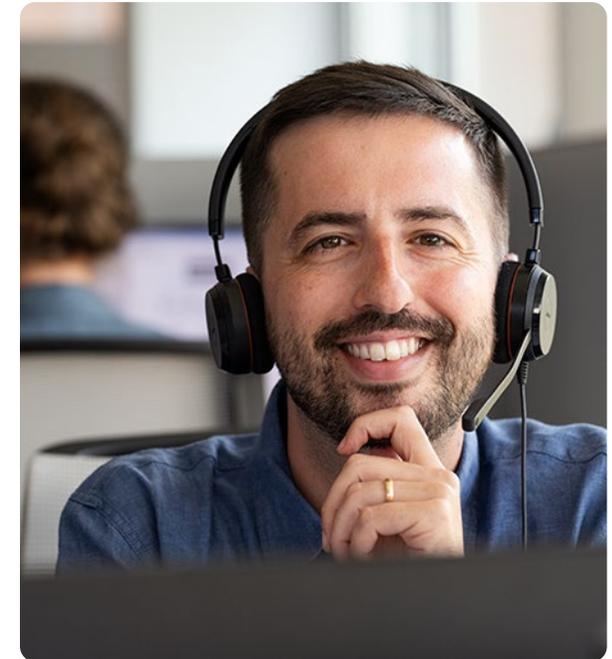
## What is Coloplast Care?

Coloplast Care is a free support programme with personalised phone support, emails, and online content, to help you manage your bladder issues when living with MS.

With Care, you can talk with your dedicated Care Advisor, as well as receive educational emails filled with helpful information.

You will find practical support articles about treatment options, hear from others living with MS, and get additional resources to help you in managing your bladder symptoms.

[www.coloplast.com/MS](http://www.coloplast.com/MS)



Sign up to Coloplast Care to receive our personalised support

1. Holland N J. Urinary Dysfunction and MS. National Multiple Sclerosis Society; 2016.
2. Phé V, Chartier-Kastler E, Panicker J N. Management of neurogenic bladder in patients with multiple sclerosis. Nature Reviews. Urology. 2016;13(5):275-288.
3. Kennelly, M., Thiruchelvam, N, Averbeck, M.A. et al, Adult Neurogenic Lower Urinary Tract Dysfunction and Intermittent Catheterisation in a community Setting: Risk Factors Model for Urinary Tract Infections. 2019, 1-14.
4. Standing S. Gray's Anatomy: The Anatomical Basis of Clinical Practice: 150 Anniversary Edition. Churchill Livingstone; 2008.