

## Product snapshot

# GentleCathAir™ catheters with FeelClean Technology™



Intermittent catheterisation is considered the gold standard for urine drainage (Holroyd, 2018). It can be used as treatment for voiding problems due to disturbances or injuries to the nervous system, non-neurogenic bladder dysfunction, or intravesical obstruction with incomplete bladder emptying (Royal College of Nursing [RCN], 2018). Irrespective of the underlying cause, patients with voiding problems frequently find themselves having to make use of a catheter to drain their bladder when it fills and thereby undertake regular intermittent self-catheterisation (ISC). Intermittent catheterisation involves the introduction of a catheter into the bladder and its immediate removal when drainage stops, a process which needs to be repeated four to six times a day (Holroyd, 2018). The experience of performing ISC, while straightforward for some, can be both difficult and painful for others (Guinet-Lacoste et al, 2016; Rognoni and Tarricone, 2017).

Catheters have developed and improved over time. They have changed from latex to silicone or polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and then, in the 1980s, the introduction of hydrophilic polymer coating (Place, 2023). One of the challenges of using hydrophilic polymer coated catheters is that it only remains fully wet for a relatively short period of time, and it can take only five to 20 minutes for the coating's hydration level to fall below 75% (Humphreys et al, 2020). This can give rise to a number of complications:

- ▶ Pain or discomfort during insertion
- ▶ Pain or discomfort during withdrawal
- ▶ Urethral trauma
- ▶ Urinary tract infection (UTI)
- ▶ Bleeding (haematuria)
- ▶ Urethral stricture (Carson and Wylie, 2022).

### GENTLECATHAIR™ FEELCLEAN TECHNOLOGY™

GentleCathAir™ uses FeelClean Technology™ to improve user experience.



#### Protects the urethra due to no sticking

Traditional hydrophilic catheters have a polyvinylpyrrolidone (PVP) coating that, with the addition of a solution, allows for smooth insertion without the use of a lubricating gel. Most coated hydrophilic intermittent catheters are made using a similar manufacturing process. Catheters need to be slippery when wet, however, when coated hydrophilic catheters begin to

dry, they become sticky, which may cause discomfort and urethral damage.

Unlike traditional catheters that have an external hydrophilic coating, FeelClean Technology embeds the hydrophilic additive into the GentleCath catheter material. This means all surfaces of the catheter are hydrophilic, from the tip to the end. In testing, GentleCath with FeelClean Technology took less force to start removing than the leading coated catheter (Carson and Wylie, 2022).



#### Designed to reduce discomfort, bleeding and the risk of urinary tract infections

When water is applied to the outside of GentleCathAir, it is attracted to the surface of the catheter where the hydrophilic additive is embedded, instantly creating a slippery surface. Within a wet environment, it will continue to retain its hydrophilic properties. This avoids the sticking and tugging associated with some coated hydrophilic catheters (Pollard et al, 2022; *In vitro* data on file).



## Minimal mess and residue

FeelClean Technology does not stick and leaves minimal residue and mess behind (Convatec, data on file: WHRI4930 TA565), both in and around the urethra, on hands and clothes, which is unpleasant for the user.

Other GentleCathAir intermittent catheter for female features include:

- ▶ Discreet design to look like a cosmetic and fit into women's day-to-day lives
- ▶ Leak-proof seal so that the lid can be replaced, and it can be thrown away later
- ▶ Minimal loose pieces as the cap secularly clicks onto the base of the AirCase™ for fewer pieces to worry about
- ▶ Pure water instant activation which is ready to use on opening the case
- ▶ A handle with a long funnel for easy and hygienic handling without touching the catheter
- ▶ Sustainability — excluding the catheter, all parts are recyclable.

Using an intermittent catheter can be a life changing treatment option. They are designed to give individuals more control over their bladder and freedom to do things outside of the home.

Traditional coated hydrophilic catheters have been associated with pain and discomfort and seen as a 'normal' part of catheterising, when in fact, they are probably not using the right catheter for them (Convatec, data on file, 2018; Laws, 2023). Indeed, hydrophilic coated catheters only remain fully wet for a relatively short period of time (5–20 minutes). This can be a problem if ISC takes longer than that, for example, for those with less dexterity or spinal cord injury (Place, 2023). As the coating dries out it becomes sticky making it difficult to insert or withdraw. This can result in pain and discomfort and a risk of friction and trauma to the urethra Discomfort is not normal and should not be the standard. Catheter users should feel more comfortable, have less anxiety, have reduced infections and feel confident and motivated to live their best life without worrying about their catheter.

FeelClean Technology is proven to provide additional benefits to catheter users and with no sticking and minimal residue, GentleCath intermittent catheters can provide a cleaner and more comfortable experience for users.

## CLINICAL EVIDENCE

In a recent publication, clinicians working in primary and secondary care, described issues faced by their patients, giving feedback from their experience of using GentleCath with FeelClean Technology (Laws, 2023). Bai (2023) reports that it is much simpler to use, giving patients more confidence when they perform ISC. She also comments it is a

more comfortable experience for patients. Coghlan (2023) tells us that patients find it a user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing design. It is smooth and mess free, giving a cleaner experience. She feels that this may make patients feel more at ease. Ngwenya (2023) states it gives a significantly improved patient catheterisation experience. Perkins (2023) reported that patients had commented on the ease of storage. Patients also described less mess, giving a better grip, resulting in fewer incidents of accidentally dropping the catheter. Roberts (2023) states that a big challenge during catheterisation is pain or discomfort, especially in high-tone non-relaxing sphincters, e.g. young women. Patients report less pain and discomfort with GentleCath, and that it was notably wet when they removed it. Sharkey (2023) describes how ISC has a significant impact on a patient's daily routine. She states that unlike other catheters that are sticky or have gel, the feeling of these catheters was soft and clean. Thomas (2023) says that the most commonly reported problem with ISC is pain on insertion. She reported that in her experience there was no pain or soreness, probably due to the coating and non-sticky feel of GentleCath. She also states patients particularly liked the easy to use packaging, making un-boxing and preparation simpler and user-friendly. Willis (2023) explains how the product has had a significant positive impact on her service, particularly in terms of time-saving. It has become their go-to catheter for troubleshooting patient issues, especially bleeding during the procedure.

Catheter users also share their personal experience of using these catheters. Two patients describe how using GentleCath catheters has positively improved their quality of life.

In summary, evidence shows that using Convatec GentleCath catheters with FeelClean Technology has the potential to decrease complications (Carson and Wylie, 2022), which could result in faster, cleaner and more comfortable catheter experience and be more cost effective for the NHS.

## RESOURCES, ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR PATIENTS

For people using intermittent catheters and their clinicians, Amcare™ and the me+™ programme are available to offer resources, advice, support and product delivery.

### Amcare™

Amcare™ has provided a nationwide home health support service to people living with stoma and continence conditions for over 30 years.

The Amcare urology nurse team provide a care quality commission (CQC) registered service for assessment, treatment and diagnostics, and are there to help and support both clinicians and patients with continence or urology issues in clinics. The team aims

to help take pressure off services as they can respond to any patients experiencing issues with their urology and continence products and help clinicians reduce their backlog of patients waiting to be seen.

Amcare home delivery works in partnership with the NHS to offer users a full range of stoma, continence and bowel care products, delivered directly to their door. Whatever product is used, Amcare home delivery can manage the whole process for them.

It has an award-winning delivery partner, which has a reliable fleet of almost 3,700 vehicles with far reaching coverage from Scotland to Cornwall, also delivering to the Channel Islands and the Outer Hebrides.

In summary, Amcare can:

- ▶ Provide peace of mind for users of urology products by making the ordering and delivery of products simple, reliable and discreet
- ▶ Use a wealth of experience to be able to compassionately support and advise clinicians on all aspects of caring for patients with urology conditions
- ▶ Customise the service provided to every customer to suit their needs.

## THE ME+™ PROGRAMME

The me+™ Programme was developed to alleviate the fears and worries associated with all aspects of intermittent self-catheterisation, including products, support and services.

It was created in collaboration with clinicians and intermittent catheter users to provide a range of resources, tools and information alongside professional advice and personalised support from the Amcare urology nurse team.

The me+ Programme for continence care features web-based resources, including user guides. These provide instructions and tips on using GentleCath products to ensure each individual user has access to the information they require to start catheterisation. The me+ Answers section also offers users help finding the most relevant answers and information easily and quickly.



## LOCATING RESOURCES

For Amcare support and advice call 0800 88 50 50 or send an email to [info@amcaregroup.co.uk](mailto:info@amcaregroup.co.uk), or for more information visit: [www.amcarebyconvatec.com/for-customers/continence-care/](http://www.amcarebyconvatec.com/for-customers/continence-care/)

To join me+: [www.convatec.com/en-gb/continence-care/me-services/](http://www.convatec.com/en-gb/continence-care/me-services/)

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