

Knowledge of patient preferences can help improve adherence to catheter therapy

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Background

The use of a urinary catheter is very personal. Guidelines highlighted by the US Department of Health and Human Services, via the National Guideline Clearinghouse, state that the patients' individual circumstances for intermittent catheterization should be assessed before choosing type of catheter, tip and aids. The patients' needs and desires should therefore be investigated. In the follow up period the adherence should be assessed by keeping a registration of the catheterization practice, cessation and other relevant aspects.

Objective

The purpose of this survey was to learn more about the patients' catheter preferences and translate this into practical guidance to nurses and other healthcare personnel on how to optimize the selection of intermittent urinary catheters and how to ensure compliance of intermittent catheterization.

Patient survey

In a cohort of patients performing daily intermittent catheterization (n=374), catheter preferences were investigated by predefined catheter statements (Fig. 1). The patients were asked to use a total of 10 points split on as many features as they wished (stated preference). The relative importance of the catheter features was then measured by summing up the points from all respondents. In a subgroup of patients who had switched catheters (n=250), the reason for switch was investigated (revealed preference). The preferences, stated as well as revealed, were grouped into the categories "medical complications" and "convenience".

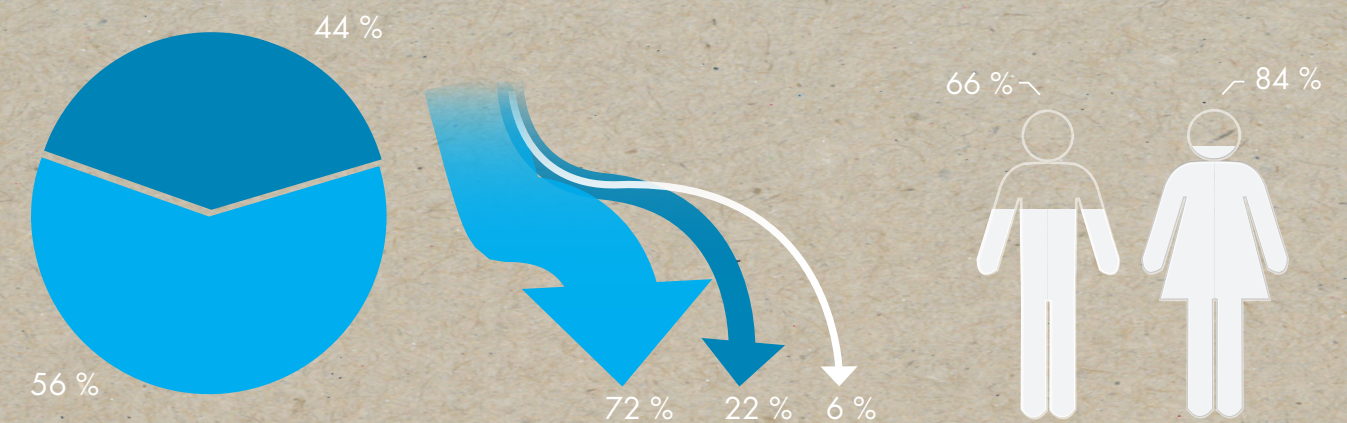
Stated preferences

Medical complications

- My catheter does not cause trauma and/or complication, e.g. strictures, bleeding, false passage to the urethra.
- My catheter reduces the risk for urinary tract infections (UTI).
- Using my catheter is not related to pain and/or discomfort.

Convenience

- My catheter is ready to use whenever I need it with minimal preparation (e.g. no separate add on lubricant is needed).
- My catheter is easy-to-use (e.g. to open package, get access to catheter, hanging function, good grip).
- My catheter is discrete and convenient (e.g., easy to bring and use away from home, foldable, discrete to use and dispose of).
- My catheter has a smart and appealing packaging and design.
- My catheter does not require any specific cleaning or storage.



Stated preferences

Patients' stated preferences were allocated to convenience features by 56% of the total points and to medical complications by 44% of the total points. Among users of intermittent catheterization, so called convenience features (such as easy handling and discrete packaging) appear to be as important as the ability to reduce the medical complications (such as urinary tract infections, trauma, pain and discomfort) when evaluating urinary catheters.

Revealed preferences

When investigating the revealed preferences among a subgroup of users who previously had a different catheter, the reason for switch was due to convenience features in 72% of the cases and medical complications in 22% of the cases and other reasons (such as financial issues) in 6% of the cases. The revealed preferences in the switch group confirm the finding in the whole group that convenience features matter to the users of intermittent catheterization.

Gender differences

There was a significant difference between men and women in revealed preferences, where more women (84 %) than men (66 %) switched catheter due to convenience features.

Translation into clinical practice

The importance of catheter features related to convenience was expressed by experienced users of intermittent catheterization and it was also confirmed as the main reason for switching catheters in a subgroup of patients who previously had a different catheter.

1 Hence, when prescribing a catheter to a user of intermittent catheterization different catheter types need to be tried out to ensure best convenience in the patients' daily life

2 To maintain compliance/adherence questions related to convenience need special attention in the follow up visits. Patients should be continuously offered to evaluate new potentially more convenient catheters when available.

