

Izzy Whizzy - Let's get Busy and Get Mid-Stream Specimen of Urine Right - the first time.

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Imagine the scene, you an intelligent woman, have been given careful instructions but you still have quite literally a disaster on your hands. What is the cause of this dilemma? It is something that is requested of many thousands of women every day - a mid stream specimen of urine.

Have you ever tried to do that magic mid stream pee into a small bottle?

The instruction to start flow, stop flow, place the collection vessel against the body, start again, fill the bottle, stop, take the bottle away and then at last finish your pee! Is it any wonder that most women find it difficult to say the least and may even find it to be impossible. You are also told to not contaminate the bottle during these urine-flow gymnastics, but when you are in mid flow it is very difficult not to end up with wet hands, wet seat and generally in quite a mess. There is then the fun and games needed to try and dry the outside of the bottle, dry your hands, wipe the seat, pull up your underwear and emerge feeling in control.

Thankfully there is now a new device, the Whiz® UCD, that does away with a lot of these problems. It has been designed specifically for women to give a mid-stream specimen of urine not only with less spillage and hence greater dignity, but also with a much lower risk of contaminating the sample. The device comes with simple pictorial instructions that would be hard to misunderstand.

With the Whiz UCD you start with the



The Whiz® UCD

device in place and it works in such a way that the initial flow of urine is diverted straight into the toilet. Next comes the clever part - when there is an appropriate mid stream flow of urine, there is an automatic capture of the correct amount of mid-stream urine in the bottle; any remaining urine again being diverted into the toilet. This is all good news for women as they no longer have to try to stop and start mid-stream, and the whole experience should be less messy, but does it do anything for the NHS?

The traditional method of obtaining a mid stream specimen of urine results in high contamination rates. This can be due to either the instructions being of poor quality or the women misunderstanding them. Indeed, guidelines from the Health Protection Agency (BSOP 41i) specify that MSUs should be taken 'without interrupting flow'. It is not therefore surprising that many inadvertently contaminated specimens are routinely sent for laboratory examination at a huge cost to the NHS without being of any use. It has been estimated that there are 45-52 million mid-stream specimens of urine given by women in the UK every year. A recent study has shown a clinically significant reduction of 32% in contamination of samples collected using the 'Whiz®UCD, as opposed to traditional methods. Better quality of samples allow more accurate analysis, improved diagnosis and greater accuracy in prescribing antibiotics, decreasing their overuse and wastage. To the person that is already perhaps suffering with a urinary tract infection, any re-test needed because of contamination can cause frustration at the inconvenience and delay in appropriate treatment.

So do women like the device? It has been tried out in an increasing number of centres in the UK, with three out of four women saying that they would prefer to use the device rather than the usual method of collection. This together with the potential savings on the costs laboratory testing and toilet area cleaning must be good news for the NHS. As a physiotherapy clinician I have found that many women cannot use their pelvic floor muscles and would therefore be unable to do an efficient mid-stream sample of urine, this new device will be greeted with great glee by them - no more wet hands, no more wading through puddles. Have I tried it? I most certainly have and as a person who is known to have frustrations with many devices I found it a cinch - isn't it great to have good news to share?