

CLAIMS

1. A wetting mechanism for wetting a tube of a male urinary catheter, the wetting mechanism comprising:
 - a housing forming a gripping element for the catheter, the housing
5 being configured to be positioned initially at or proximal to the tip end of the catheter tube;
 - wherein the housing comprises a wetting chamber into which at least a portion of the catheter tube is able to be introduced and be moved therethrough to move at least a portion of the catheter tube through the wetting
10 chamber, in use; and
 - wherein the wetting mechanism comprises a wetting applicator positioned within the wetting chamber configured to hold fluid therein and release said fluid to wet the catheter tube upon movement of the tube through the wetting chamber.
- 15 2. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the wetting applicator comprises a flexible, compressible and/or resilient material.
3. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 2, wherein the wetting applicator is deformable under the application of a force thereto; and wherein deformation of the wetting applicator cause releases of fluid held therein.
- 20 4. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the wetting applicator comprises a sponge or foam material, operable to absorb the fluid, in use.
5. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the wetting applicator comprises a wicking material operable, in use, to draw the fluid
25 therethrough for application to the catheter tube.
6. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the wetting applicator comprises a baffle arrangement.
7. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 6, wherein the baffle arrangement defines a plurality of subregions of the wetting applicator each configured to
30 hold a portion of the fluid held within the wetting applicator.

8. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 7, wherein the baffle arrangement defines a plurality of subregions within the wetting chamber in which the fluid may reside and/or be released into.
- 5 9. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the wetting applicator defines a channel within the wetting chamber, or at least partially defines the wetting chamber of the wetting mechanism.
10. A wetting mechanism of any preceding claim, wherein the tip end of the catheter tube is, at least initially, disposed outside the wetting chamber.
- 10 11. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 10, wherein the tip end of the catheter tube is, at least initially, held within an inlet of the wetting chamber.
12. A wetting mechanism of any preceding claim, wherein the housing comprises a holding chamber containing a volume of wetting fluid therein, and wherein the wetting chamber is fluidly connected or connectable to the holding chamber.
- 15 13. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 12, comprising a fluid release control component operable, in use, to control release of the fluid from the holding chamber into the wetting chamber.
14. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 13, wherein the fluid release control component is operable to control release of the fluid from the holding chamber
20 onto and/or into the wetting applicator.
15. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 14, wherein the fluid release control component comprises a moveable plug, moveable between a first position wherein it prevents release of the fluid from the holding chamber to the wetting chamber and/or the wetting applicator, and a second position wherein
25 it allows release of the fluid from the holding chamber to the wetting chamber and/or the wetting applicator.
16. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 15, wherein the plug is linearly moveable or is rotatable between first and second positions.
17. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 15 or claim 16, wherein movement
30 of the plug between first and second positions exposes or otherwise unblock one or more openings within the housing between the holding chamber and the

wetting chamber, thereby releasing fluid from within the holding chamber and into the wetting chamber and/or into or onto the wetting applicator.

18. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any of claims 12 to 17, wherein the fluid release control component comprises a container positioned within or at least partially defining the holding chamber and having the fluid contained therein, and wherein the container is rupturable or otherwise openable to release fluid contained therein.
19. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 18, wherein the wetting mechanism is configured such that the container may be ruptured or otherwise opened, in use, upon a user compressing, bending and/or flexing the housing.
20. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any of claims 12 to 19, wherein the wetting chamber comprises an inlet through which the catheter tube is able to be introduced into the wetting chamber; and wherein the wetting mechanism comprises a removeable stopper configured to block, or at least partially block, the inlet.
21. A wetting mechanism for wetting a tube of a male urinary catheter, the wetting mechanism comprising:
- a housing forming a gripping element for the catheter, the housing being configured to be positioned initially at or proximal to the tip end of the catheter tube;
- wherein the housing comprises a wetting chamber into which at least a portion of the catheter tube is able to be introduced and be moved therethrough to move at least a portion of the catheter tube through the wetting chamber, in use; and
- wherein the wetting mechanism is configured such that the catheter tube is wetted with wetting fluid contained within the housing upon movement of the tube through the wetting chamber.
22. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 21, wherein the wetting fluid is contained within the wetting chamber.
23. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 22, wherein the wetting fluid is contained within a holding chamber within the housing, the holding chamber being fluidly connected to the wetting chamber.

24. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 23, wherein the housing comprises an opening or a port located between the holding chamber and the wetting chamber, and through which the wetting fluid may flow; and wherein the opening or port is configured such that the rate at which the wetting fluid may flow therethrough is limited by the surface tension of the wetting fluid.
25. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any of claims 21 to 24, wherein the housing comprises an inlet and an outlet, and wherein the inlet and/or outlet comprises a valve providing a seal to retain the wetting fluid within the housing.
26. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 25, wherein the or each valve is configured to allow the catheter tube to be moved therethrough.
27. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 26, where the housing comprises an inlet valve configured to allow the catheter tube to be moved therethrough to introduce the catheter tube into the wetting chamber of the housing; and/or where the housing comprises an outlet valve configured to allow the catheter tube to be moved therethrough to expose the catheter tube for subsequent use/insertion by the user.
28. A male urinary catheter, comprising:
a catheter tube having a tip end and a distal end; and
the wetting mechanism of any preceding claim operably coupled at or proximal to the tip end of the catheter tube for wetting the catheter tube, in use.
29. A catheter according to claim 28 further comprising a funnel provided at or proximal to the distal end of the catheter tube, with the wetting mechanism and funnel being separate components coupled via the catheter tube.
30. A catheter according to claim 29 wherein the catheter comprises a sleeve formed of a film of plastics material positioned about the catheter tube, defining an internal volume about at least a portion of the catheter tube; the sleeve being coupled at a first end to the wetting mechanism and at a second, opposing end to the funnel.

31. A sealed packaged catheter according to any of claims 28 to 30, wherein the wetting mechanism is operably coupled at or proximal to the tip end of the catheter tube within the sealed package.
32. A method for wetting a tube of a catheter using the wetting mechanism of any
5 of claims 1 to 27, the method comprising:
introducing the tip end of the catheter tube into the wetting chamber
and moving it therethrough, causing release of the fluid from the wetting
applicator thereby wetting the at least a portion of an outer surface of the
catheter tube.