

CLAIMS

1. A catheter, comprising:
 - a catheter tube having a tip end and a distal end, the distal end coupled to or forming at least part of a funnel for discharging fluid from within the catheter tube;
 - a sleeve provided about the catheter tube, coupled at an end thereof to the funnel and extending towards the tip end of the catheter tube; and
 - a wetting mechanism integrally formed with the funnel, the wetting mechanism comprising: a holding chamber having a volume of fluid contained therein; and a fluid outlet operable to allow fluid from within the holding chamber to be released within the sleeve for wetting an outer surface of the catheter tube.
2. A catheter as claimed in claim 1, wherein the funnel comprises one or more wall which at least partially define the holding chamber.
3. A catheter as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein one or more walls of the funnel define, at least in part, an outlet for fluid within the catheter tube.
4. A catheter as claimed in any of claims any preceding claim, wherein the funnel is at least partly formed of a flexible material.
5. A catheter as claimed in claim 4, wherein the funnel is at least partly formed of a compressible material.
6. A catheter as claimed in claim 4 or claim 5, wherein the funnel comprises a wall which includes a flexible and/or compressible portion defining an interaction region of the funnel, wherein the interaction region is configured to compress, bend and/or flex upon application of a force by a user.
7. A catheter as claimed in claim 6, wherein the interaction region is configured such that, in use, compressing, bending and/or flexing of the interaction region causes release of fluid from the holding chamber through the fluid outlet.
8. A catheter as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the fluid outlet comprises a valve arrangement.

9. A catheter as claimed in claim 8, wherein the valve arrangement is provided as part of the funnel and forms a closable aperture within a wall of the funnel.
10. A catheter as claimed in claim 8 or claim 9, wherein the valve arrangement is configured to open to allow fluid to flow therethrough upon compressing,
5 bending and/or flexing of the funnel.
11. A catheter as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the fluid outlet comprises a frangible portion of the funnel.
12. A catheter as claimed in claim 11, wherein the frangible portion is configured open, in use, in response to compressing, bending and/or flexing the funnel.
- 10 13. A catheter as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the fluid is contained within a container within the holding chamber.
14. A catheter as claimed in claim 13, wherein the container comprises a sachet, blister pack or capsule positioned within the holding chamber and holding fluid therein.
- 15 15. A catheter as claimed in claim 13 or claim 14, wherein the wetting mechanism is configured such that the container is ruptured, split or otherwise broken upon compressing, bending and/or flexing the funnel.
16. A catheter as claimed in claim 15, wherein rupturing, splitting or otherwise
20 breaking the container causes release of the contained fluid from the container, thereby causing the released fluid to flow through the fluid outlet and into the sleeve of the catheter.
17. A catheter as claimed in any of claims 13 to 16, wherein the fluid outlet comprises an aperture within the holding chamber allowing fluid to flow freely therethrough upon release from the container.
- 25 18. A catheter as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the funnel comprises a substantially triangular profile.
19. A catheter as claimed in claim 18, wherein an outlet of the catheter tube is positioned at a first apex, with the holding chamber extending at least partially between the other apices.

20. A catheter as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the wetting mechanism comprises a fluid release control component for controlling release of the fluid from the holding chamber.
- 5 21. A catheter as claimed in claim 20, wherein the fluid release control component is moveable between a first position corresponding to a position wherein the fluid release control component prevents release of fluid from within the holding chamber, and a second position corresponding to a position wherein the fluid release control component allows for the release of fluid from within the holding chamber.
- 10 22. A catheter as claimed in claim 20 or claim 21, wherein the fluid release control component comprises a plug configured to be at least partly withdrawn from the wetting mechanism to cause release of the fluid from the holding chamber.
- 15 23. A catheter as claimed in any preceding claim, comprising a gripper element, wherein the funnel is coupled to the sleeve at a first end of the sleeve, with the gripper element coupled at an opposing end of the sleeve.
24. A catheter as claimed in any preceding claim, comprising an intermittent urinary catheter.
25. A sealed packaged catheter according to any preceding claim.
- 20 26. A method for wetting the tube of a catheter of any preceding claim, the method comprising: operating the wetting mechanism to release fluid from the holding chamber within the sleeve for wetting an outer surface of the catheter tube.