

CLAIMS

1. A wetting mechanism for wetting a tube of a male urinary catheter, the wetting mechanism comprising:
 - 5 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 wet the catheter tube in use; and
 - 10 wherein the wetting mechanism comprises a stopper moveable between a first position in which the stopper prevents the tip end of the catheter tube being moved through the wetting chamber and a second position in which stopper does not prevent the tip end of the catheter tube being moved through the wetting chamber.
- 15 2. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the tip end of the catheter tube is, at least initially, disposed outside the wetting chamber.
3. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the stopper is linearly moveable between first and second positions.
4. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the stopper
20 comprises a plug configured to be at least partly withdrawn from the wetting mechanism in moving from the first position to the second position.
5. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the wetting chamber comprises an inlet through which the catheter tube is able to be introduced into the wetting chamber, and wherein the stopper at least partially
25 blocks the inlet in the first position.
6. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 5, configured such that movement of the stopper from the first position to the second position unblocks the inlet, thereby allowing for the catheter tube to be introduced into the wetting chamber.

7. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 5 or claim 6, wherein at least a portion of the stopper is received within the inlet of the wetting chamber with the stopper in the first position.
8. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 7, wherein an end of the stopper is received with the inlet of the wetting chamber with the stopper in the first position.
9. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 8, wherein the end of the stopper comprises a flexible and/or compressible material configured to be compressed within the inlet of the wetting chamber.
10. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 8 or claim 9, wherein the end comprises one or more cantilevered portions operable to bend or flex when at least partially received within the inlet of the wetting chamber.
11. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 10, wherein the end of the stopper comprises a plurality of cantilevered portions, the plurality of cantilevered portions being configured to bend or flex in a direction substantially towards one another when at least partially received within the inlet of the wetting chamber.
12. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any of claims 8 to 11, wherein, in use, movement of the stopper from the second position to the first position withdraws the end of the stopper from the inlet of the wetting chamber.
13. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 12, wherein withdrawal of the stopper releases any external force provided on the end of the stopper, thereby allowing the compressed, bent or flexed portion of the stopper to move to a position where it does not prevent the tip end of the catheter tube from being introduced into the wetting chamber.
14. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the stopper is tubular defining a channel therethrough, and wherein the catheter tube may be moved through said channel, in use.

15. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the wetting chamber comprises a volume of fluid contained therein.
16. A wetting mechanism as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the housing comprises a holding chamber containing a volume of fluid therein.
- 5 17. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 16, wherein the stopper forms a fluid release control component for the wetting mechanism configured to control release of fluid contained within the holding chamber to the wetting chamber.
- 10 18. A wetting mechanism as claimed in claim 17, wherein the stopper is configured such that, in the first position, the stopper prevents release of fluid from the holding chamber, and in the second position, the stopper allows release of fluid from the holding chamber into the wetting chamber.
19. A wetting mechanism of any preceding claim, configured to retain the stopper in the first and/or second position.
- 15 20. A wetting mechanism of any preceding claim, comprising a wetting applicator positioned within the wetting chamber, the wetting applicator being configured to hold wetting fluid and to control application of the fluid to the catheter tube, in use, as the catheter tube is moved through the wetting chamber.
- 20 21. A male urinary catheter, comprising:
 - a catheter tube having a tip end and a distal end; and
 - a wetting mechanism of any of claims 1 to 20 operably coupled at or proximal to the tip end of the catheter tube for wetting the catheter tube, in use.
- 25 22. A sealed packaged catheter according to claim 21, wherein the wetting mechanism is operably coupled at or proximal to the tip end of the catheter tube within the sealed package.
23. A method for wetting a tube of a catheter using the wetting mechanism of any of claims 1 to 20, the method comprising:

moving the stopper from a first position to a second position; and

subsequently introducing the tip end of the catheter tube into the wetting chamber and moving it therethrough, thereby wetting the at least a portion of an outer surface of the catheter tube.