

Peristeen Anal Irrigation in practice

“New body sensation developed”

Caregiver Sandra Rust works for ParaHelp, an association for outpatient counselling on the care and rehabilitation of people with paraplegia, in collaboration with the Swiss Paraplegic Centre in Nottwil, Switzerland. Collegial has spoken with her on her first experiences with **Peristeen** Anal Irrigation.



Collegial: When did you use **Peristeen** Anal Irrigation for the first time?

Sandra Rust: I care for a twelve-year old with spina bifida who spends a great deal of time in a wheelchair. He is very active and likes sports. Unfortunately, he also has very “active bowels” and a weak anal sphincter. So, stool simply comes out quite often. We have gone through the entire range of possible therapy – from toilet training to suppositories and oral laxatives to digital evacuation. But there was still stool in his diaper several times a day. Last fall, I heard about **Peristeen** Anal Irrigation and talked to the boy’s parents about it.

Collegial: How long did it take to become familiar with it?

Sandra Rust: I went there three times to go through the irrigation in detail with the parents. They then took over the procedure themselves. After two to three months, they knew the

emptying method for Tim* so well that he is now irrigated three times a week: Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. This has been a giant leap forward for Tim! For example, he can play sports without stool coming out all the time. There is no longer a need for toilet training



or continual diaper changes and he no longer has that embarrassing odour all the time. So far, Tim has only handled the pump. But in the summer, he will learn to do the entire irrigation process.

Collegial: What do you think makes this new system special?

Sandra Rust: Firstly, the user handles things him or herself and thereby can decide when to empty his or her bowels. Secondly, the system can be used on the toilet, leaving the user continent afterwards. Here is an aspect that shocked me: Irrigation has helped Tim develop a new sensation in his body. He now feels the balloon, feels how the water flows and when the stool comes - this is new! I’ve had this experience with other youths as well.