



Continence

Problems with bladder and bowel control can be embarrassing, however there are health professionals who deal specifically with this issue. Incontinence is a common problem and it can be managed.

With help, you can manage incontinence and resume a healthy active lifestyle.

Do you have trouble with incontinence during the day?

Q I need to go to the toilet frequently during the day Yes No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Talk with a continence specialist who can assess your continence issues and suggest strategies to manage them.

Q Sometimes I need to rush to go to the toilet Yes No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Increase your self awareness and give yourself plenty of time to get to the toilet. Learn how much time you have on average between the first sensation of bladder filling and the time when you absolutely have to get to the toilet. Plan to get to the toilet with adequate time.

Q I have difficulty undressing in time to use the toilet Yes No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Think about the type of clothing you choose to wear. Avoid multiple layers and firm fitting outer garments. Clothing with elasticised waistbands is easier than fastenings like buckles, buttons and zips.

Q I sometimes experience leakage from my bladder or bowel Yes No

A If you answered 'Yes'

You could keep a 24-hour record of when you go to the toilet, the volume of urine you pass, and a description of your bowel movement (hard, soft, runny etc.). Take this record with you to talk with your doctor or continence specialist.

Q I tend to stay at home more because I worry about bladder or bowel leakage Yes No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Talk with a continence specialist about strategies to manage bladder and bowel problems during social outings.

Do you have trouble with incontinence at night time?

Q Sometimes I wet the bed at night Yes No

A If you answered 'Yes'

There are a range of strategies you can use:

- › go to the toilet immediately before going to bed
- › think about the drinks you have after your evening meal
- › discuss fluid intake with a continence specialist
- › discuss the type and timing of medication with your pharmacist or doctor
- › consider using continence aids, such as pads
- › consider using a waterproof bed sheet
- › place a commode or a urinal next to your bed.

Q I need to go to the toilet during the night Yes No

A If you answered 'Yes'

Your general practitioner can help if you feel you are not emptying your bladder fully, or if the urine stream is poor. Also:

- › think about the drinks you have after your evening meal
- › discuss fluid intake with a continence specialist
- › discuss the type and timing of medication with your pharmacist or doctor
- › review your night lighting.

Tips to help with incontinence

- › Talk about any incontinence issues with your doctor or other health professional.
- › Consider a continence assessment by a continence advisor or continence physiotherapist.

Who can help?

- › Contenance advisor
- › Contenance physiotherapist
- › Doctor
- › Pharmacist

For further information or to find a continence specialist in your area, contact the Contenance Foundation of Australia (details available on page 40).

When out and about, plan your trip by using the National Public Toilet Map, which is a useful website showing the locations of public and private toilets across Australia. Visit the website: www.toiletmap.gov.au.

I plan to take action by...

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