

Continence Products and Appliances





What are continence products?

Continence products help you to manage bladder or bowel leaks and accidents. Using continence products can give a person confidence and security and improve their quality of life.

These products can be used for a short while during treatment or as a long-term solution if the problem can't be corrected.


If you are using continence products on a long-term basis talk to your doctor, health worker or continence adviser regularly to make sure you are using the ones that suit you the best.

What types of continence aids are available?

Absorbent pads and pants

- These products are designed to soak up urine (water or wee) and contain faecal (goona or cooney) loss. They are available in a range of sizes and different levels of absorbency.
- Some pads are disposable (throw away after using) and designed for one use only. Other pads and pants can be used again many times after washing.
- To reduce odour (smell) and get the most out of the pads they should be held in





place by either firm fitting underwear or specially designed pants that hold the pad firmly in place.

Absorbent bed sheets and chair covers

- Reusable (use again) and disposable bed and chair protection is available. If used as suggested, moisture is absorbed into the material layers away from the skin. They can be used to directly absorb the urine loss or provide extra protection when used with other continence aids.

Condom drainage and catheters


- These products allow the urine to drain into a collection device such as a leg drainage bag. Your health worker or a continence adviser will give you information and advice on the correct type and size of product needed.

Toilet products and appliances

- Urinals, bedpans or commodes can help people manage if they are unable to move easily and quickly. Handrails and raised toilet seats can also help people who have trouble moving around.

What to think about when choosing continence products

The best product is the one that works best for you, is comfortable and helps you to have a normal lifestyle. Think about:





1. The type and how severe the incontinence
The continence products you choose may depend on how often and the amount of urine and/or faeces you loose.

2. Your lifestyle

Your needs at work, home and your social activities may affect your choice of continence products.

3. How mobile you are and how skilled

Your ability to reach the toilet and change continence products without help may need to be assessed.

4. How available the products are

Some continence products are available locally from supermarkets and chemists. To buy others you may need to go to specialist medical suppliers.

5. How to get rid of used products


Most disposable products can be put in with the normal household rubbish. Talk to your local council if you have any questions or concerns.

NEVER flush them down the toilet.

6. Washing guidelines

Manufacturers can give you information on the care of reusable products. In most cases, washing guidelines are included on the product or its packaging.





Who pays for continence products?

Continence products can be expensive, in most cases the person or their family must pay the costs.

For returned service men/women the Department of Veterans' Affairs may pay the costs (check with them to see if you or your family member are eligible).


In some circumstances certain products are available free of charge through government-funded schemes. Speak to your doctor, health worker or continence adviser for more information.


To find out if you are eligible and the types of aids available talk to a continence adviser, health worker at the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or the National Continence Helpline on Freecall™ **1800 33 00 66**.

Need help in selecting continence products?

At first you may have to try different products. You may need the help of a health worker or continence adviser in choosing the products that suit your needs the best.

The Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Medical Service can either help you or refer





you to the National Continence Helpline for more information and names of continence advisers in each State and Territory who can help you.


Remember

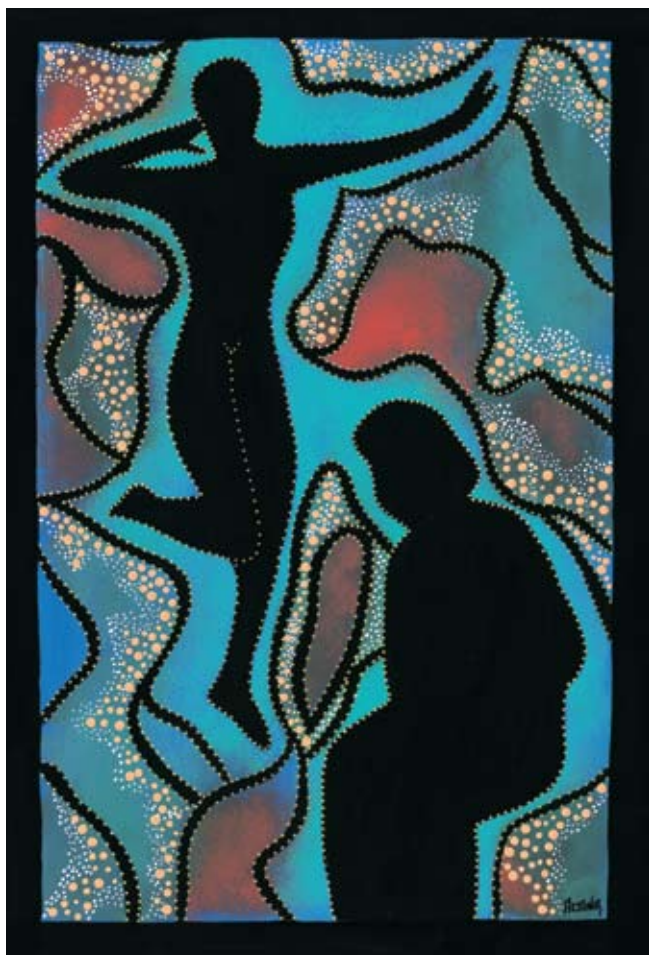
You are not alone. Incontinence can be prevented, better managed, treated and sometimes cured.

Diabetes warning:

If you are always feeling thirsty and having to urinate (pass water or wee) all the time, tell the doctor or the health worker. It is important that you are checked to make sure diabetes (sugar sickness) is not the problem.

Who can help?

- Your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service.
 - Doctors.
 - A special continence adviser.
 - National Continence Helpline Freecall™ **1800 33 00 66**.
 - Visit the website at www.bladderbowel.gov.au or the National Public Toilet Map website at www.toiletmap.gov.au
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Other brochures in this series:

- Contenance Myths and Facts
- Bladder Training
- What is Urinary Incontinence
- Good Bladder Training for Everyone
- What is a Contenance Assessment
- Constipation and Urinary Incontinence
- Pelvic Floor Exercises for Men
- Bladder Problems and the Prostate
- Pelvic Floor Exercises for Women
- Dementia and Urinary Incontinence
- A List of Ten Frequently Asked Questions
- Constipation
- Contenance Comic



Australian Government

Department of Health and Ageing

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