

Resident and Family Education

Urinary Incontinence

Incontinence is not a routine part of aging, despite the prevalence of incontinence in the elderly. Discovering the type of incontinence is a key to properly treating it.

TYPES OF INCONTINENCE

Urge Incontinence (also called *Overactive Bladder*)

The sudden urge to urinate or the inability to reach the toilet in time is the most common type of incontinence in the elderly.

Stress Incontinence

The leakage of urine when coughing or sneezing, often due to poor muscle tone in the pelvic floor. Stress incontinence is more common in women.

Overflow Incontinence

A weak urinary stream or frequent dribbling of urine. In men, overflow incontinence is often due to an enlarged prostate.

Mixed Incontinence

This is usually a combination of urge and stress incontinence, and it is common among the elderly (especially women).

Functional Incontinence

There is no condition of the urinary tract, but some other reason such as certain medications, or inability to unfasten clothing. Getting to the root of the problem often cures this “Incontinence”.

Transient Incontinence

Temporary or transient incontinence can be due to many causes, each of which has its own treatment. An example is a urinary tract infection; once the infection is resolved, so is the incontinence.

TREATMENT OF INCONTINENCE

To successfully treat incontinence:

- Determine the voiding pattern by keeping a diary of when the resident urinates
- Determine the type of incontinence and if it can be resolved (Functional, for example)
- Conduct a thorough assessment
 - Complete physical
 - Medical and surgical history
 - Current medications
 - Smoking and alcohol history and intake
 - Specific testing for the urinary tract
- Develop a care plan that attempts to restore as much bladder function as possible
 - Bladder training programs
 - Pelvic floor muscle exercises
 - Medications
 - Absorbent Products
- Use disposable incontinence products that are appropriate for the severity of the incontinence and the ability of the resident to use the toilet

