

Continence care during a hospital stay

Adult Continence Service

Information for Patients

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What is incontinence?

Incontinence means you cannot fully control when you pee or poo. This can make you accidentally leak pee (urinary incontinence) or poo (bowel incontinence).

People often think that being incontinent when you are older is normal. **This is not true.** Incontinence can happen at any age. When you get older, how much your bladder can hold may be reduced and the muscles may have weakened, but, you should still be in control.

There is always a reason for your incontinence. Many types of incontinence can be cured or improved with just simple lifestyle changes.

What happens if I am incontinent while in hospital?

You may become incontinent because you are not well. This should get better after a few days. If it does not get better or you have had a problem controlling your pee or poo for some time, the ward can assess you with a basic continence assessment. They can refer you to the hospital Continence Team for a full assessment and treatment whilst you are in hospital if needed.

Do not be afraid to ask for help in using the toilet. Ask as soon as you get the urge to go. Do not leave it too long. The nurses are here to help.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

How can incontinence products help me?

Incontinence pads:

If you have pee or poo leakages, you may need to wear an incontinence pad. This is used to protect your skin from leakages. Wearing a pad should not take the place of using a toilet, commode, urinal or bedpan. For patient dignity and to promote independence, we use a range of pads with different absorbencies. The pads absorb pee quickly, store it inside the pad and keep it “locked” away from the skin.

You will need to have the lowest absorbency pad that meets your need. This is because if the absorbency is too high or pads are changed before they are full, the pad starts to absorb moisture from the skin. This can make the skin dry and irritated. The pads have a yellow wetness indicator which turns blue when it gets full. The pad will need to be changed when the yellow indicator turns 3 out of 4 parts blue.

There are not any pads available that can absorb poo. The pads must be changed right away if you have poo in them.

Most of the pads used at Leicester’s hospitals are a 2 piece system. This means you will have to wear a disposable pad with close-fitting net pants. This is to reduce leakage as the pads need to be worn very close to the body. Wearing the correct size net pants makes sure that the pad is applied correctly. Using your own underwear is only advisable if you are using small pads with a sticky strip. These will also need to be close-fitting. The pad can leak when you wear loose fitting underwear or boxer shorts.

If you are unsure about the correct absorbency to meet your needs or wish to be shown how to fit your pad correctly, speak to your nurse on the ward.

Other products:

- For men in hospital, a penile sheath (like a condom) is available if suitable. This is an external device attached to a pee collection bag. You may prefer this over wearing pads. We will give you a 3 day supply on discharge if needed. You can arrange more supplies through your GP. Ask your nurse for more information.
- For women in hospital, an external catheter is available called Purewick. This can be used instead of a pad to manage pee incontinence. It helps to prevent skin damage due to leaking pee. This is only available while you are in hospital.

There are many more products available from the community continence service for managing pee incontinence, for both men and women.

Taking care of your skin

Our skin has a natural acid barrier which protects the skin. Constant contact with pee or poo can cause the skin to break down. Washing with soap and water often can also cause break down of the acid barrier on the skin (skin excoriation) and disrupt moisture balance (moisture lesion). If you are have any problems with your skin please speak to your nurse.

In hospital we use special continence wipes which have cleanser, moisturiser and barrier cream in them. These replace the need for soap, water and towels. It reduces the risk of skin break down. At home you could use mild unscented soap and water, rinse and then gently pat the skin dry with a soft towel. Or you could get continence skin hygiene products from pharmacies.

To protect the skin apply a barrier moisturising cream. Avoid using oil based creams and talcum powder below the waist. Both of these can “clog” up the pores of a pad, affecting its ability to absorb pee.

Do not wear continence pads just in case you have a leak. The pads are designed to absorb pee. If you do not leak pee the pad will absorb moisture from the skin and can cause skin damage.

Where can I get incontinence products after leaving hospital?

If you were getting incontinence pads from the community home delivery service before your admission, you should continue to get these.

You can reorder more on **0800 030 4466**.

Please be aware that the pads used in our hospitals may be different from those available from the community service.

If you have only just started using incontinence pads on this hospital admission (not including end of life care) the following should happen:

- You will get a 24 hour supply of incontinence pads from your ward.
- The hospital Continence Team does not prescribe incontinence pads. The ward can refer you to the Community Continence Service through the Single Point of Access (SPA) for a continence assessment if needed. If you are eligible you will get a free prescription of pads as part of your treatment programme.
- The Community Continence Team will contact you by phone or letter to organise the continence assessment. There is a waiting list. Whilst you wait for your assessment you will need to buy your own pads. These can be purchased online, from a supermarket, or from a pharmacy. Ask your ward nurse for advice.
- For end of life care, any incontinence products needed for and after discharge will be arranged as part of your discharge plan and given by the Community Nurses.
- All other continence products such as penile sheath's and catheter packs will be supplied by a Continence Prescribing Hub. Staff at the Hub will contact you and arrange your products. You can choose to have them from your local pharmacy or delivered by a continence delivery service.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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