

Bladder and bowel problems

Common problems and how to manage them

Health & wellbeing



Information and advice you need to help you love later life.

We're Age UK and our goal is to enable older people to love later life.

We are passionate about affirming that your later years can be fulfilling years. Whether you're enjoying your later life or going through tough times, we're here to help you make the best of your life.

Our network includes Age Cymru, Age NI, Age Scotland, Age International and more than 160 local partners.

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What this guide is about

Many people of all ages have a long-term problem with controlling their bladder or bowel, and this can have a real impact on their daily lives. This guide looks at different types of bladder and bowel problems and what you can do to help yourself. In many cases your problem can be cured or managed so that it does not interfere with your everyday life.

More than 3.2 million people over 65 in the UK suffer from urinary incontinence, and 6.5 million people of all ages are affected by some form of bowel problem. Many don't talk about these problems or seek any help, either out of embarrassment or because they think nothing can be done. But there are actions you can take to help you deal with some of the common problems. Bladder and bowel problems are not an inevitable part of getting older, and if you're experiencing them you should not delay speaking to a health professional about it.

Throughout this guide you will find suggestions for organisations that can offer further information and advice about your options. Their contact details can be found in the 'Useful organisations' section (see pages 30–34). Contact details for organisations near you can usually be found in the local phone book. If you have difficulty finding them, your local Age UK should be able to help (see page 30). As far as possible, the information given in this guide is applicable across the UK.

Key



This symbol indicates where information differs for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



This symbol indicates who to contact for the next steps you need to take

How the bladder works

The bladder is a muscular balloon-shaped bag in the lower part of your body, supported by pelvic floor muscles. Urine is made in the kidneys, passes down the ureters, and is stored in the bladder until you are ready to pass water.

When you go to the toilet the bladder contracts, the bladder outlet relaxes, and urine empties out. Your brain controls your bladder, automatically sending messages telling it when to hold on and when to empty.

The female urinary system

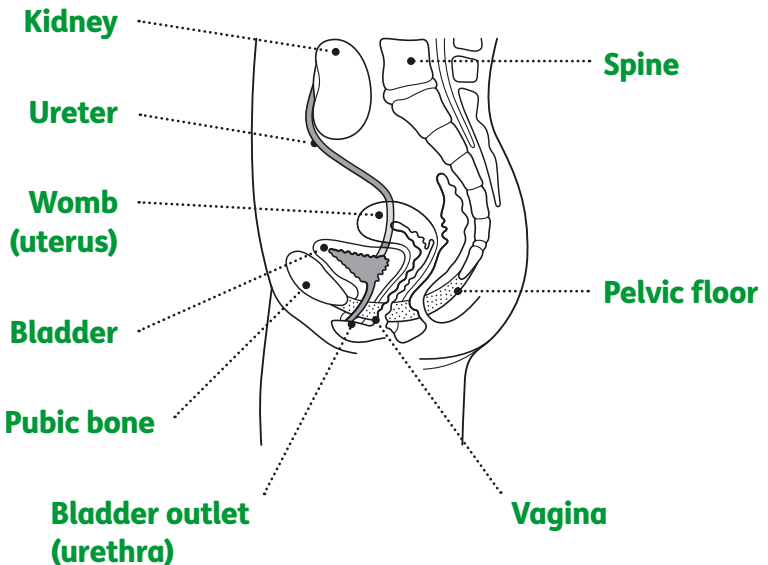
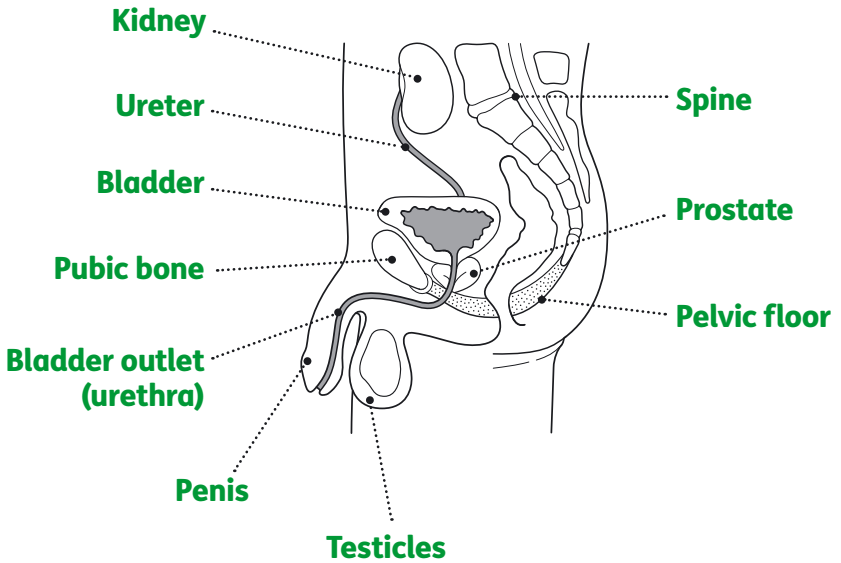


Diagram courtesy of Parkinson's UK

The male urinary system



A normal bladder:

- empties four to seven times each day (every three to four hours)
- can hold up to a pint of urine (between 400ml and 600ml), but usually feels quite full at about half this amount
- may wake you up once or twice at night to pass water
- tells you when it's full but gives you enough time to find a toilet
- empties completely each time you pass urine
- does not leak urine.

Diagram courtesy of Parkinson's UK

Types of bladder problem

There are many different types of bladder problem. Urinary tract infections (UTIs), such as cystitis, can cause temporary bladder problems, such as the urgent need to pass urine, or a burning sensation when you go to the toilet. They can be painful and uncomfortable but the symptoms should clear up after a few days. If they don't disappear after five days, see your GP, as you may need antibiotics.

There is a range of longer term problems that you might experience. These are the most common.

Stress incontinence

This is when you let out urine when you cough, sneeze, laugh or exercise. Even gentle exercise, such as walking, can cause leakage if you have stress incontinence. It's more common in women and is caused by a weak bladder outlet and weak pelvic floor muscles that support it.

In women, the bladder outlet is very close to the vagina. The pelvic floor muscles, which support the bladder, urethra, uterus and rectum, can be stretched and weakened during childbirth. This can ultimately lead to something called a prolapse. Being overweight can also put strain on these muscles. After the menopause, the body stops producing the hormones that help keep the vagina and bladder outlet healthy.

Men may develop stress incontinence after a prostate operation.

Urge incontinence

Urge incontinence can often be caused by an overactive bladder. Many people find that, as they get older, the bladder becomes more unpredictable, gives less warning and needs emptying more often. This is normal, until it becomes a problem or starts to cause incontinence. Then it's time to seek help.

The main symptom of an overactive bladder is a sudden, urgent need to pass urine, but not being able to reach the toilet in time. You may also need to pass urine more often than usual. This is known as 'frequency'. You may be woken several times at night.

The cause of an overactive bladder is often unknown. Sometimes it happens following a stroke or other disease of the nervous system, when the brain is no longer able to tell the bladder to 'hold on' until you get to a toilet.

Nocturia

If you're frequently getting up more than twice during the night and it's disturbing your sleep, making you tired in the day and affecting your daily activities, speak to your GP or district nurse.

Overflow incontinence

This happens when the bladder does not empty completely. Urine builds up and in the end may overflow, often as a frequent dribbling leakage. The bladder may not empty completely for a number of reasons:

- there may be an obstruction, such as an enlarged prostate gland in men
- if you are severely constipated, your bowel may become over-full and press on your bladder, reducing the amount it can hold or creating a need to pass urine
- conditions such as multiple sclerosis, stroke or Parkinson's disease may make the bladder less efficient at emptying.

If you have overflow incontinence, you may have difficulty starting to pass urine and feel that your bladder does not empty completely. The stream may be slower than before.

what next?

For more information about identifying bladder problems, see the Bladder and Bowel Foundation's booklet *A healthy bladder: what to do if things go wrong* (see page 31).

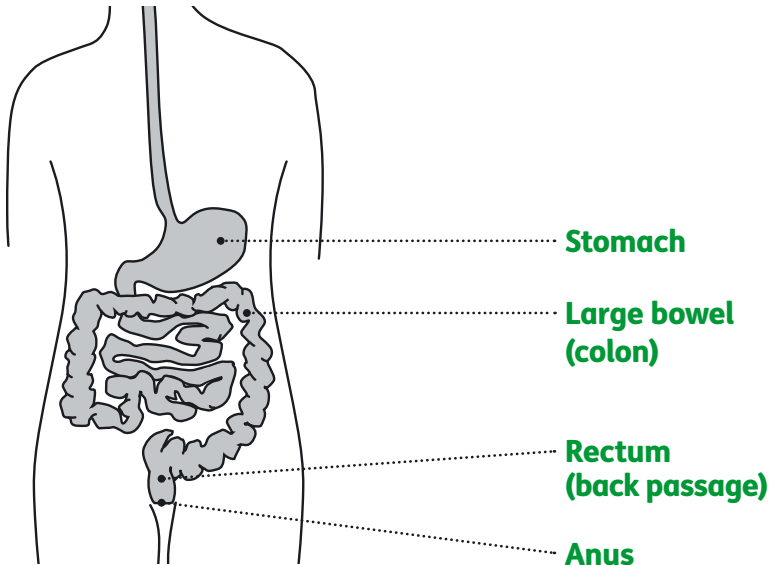
It's very important to see your GP if you experience any of the problems explained above, so that you can be examined and decide how best to manage them in the long term.

If you notice any blood in your urine, or if you feel pain while passing urine, you should see your GP promptly.

If you have a bladder or bowel control problem, talking about it, especially with a health professional, is the best first step you can take to help yourself.

How the bowel works

Food passes from the stomach into the upper part of the bowel. It then passes along the large bowel where fluid is absorbed and the remains of undigested food form the basis of a bowel motion (faeces). When a bowel motion arrives in the rectum it creates a feeling of fullness. When you go to the toilet, the anal sphincter relaxes to allow the bowel motion to pass from the rectum and out through the anus.



Normal bowel motions:

- are soft and easy to pass
- may come several times a day or only once every two to three days (either can be normal)
- don't cause you to strain.

Types of bowel problem

Many of us experience upset stomachs once in a while, or have constipation every now and again. However, if any of these problems happen regularly, or are starting to affect your daily life, go to your GP.

Constipation

This is the most usual type of bowel problem, and happens when hard bowel motions become difficult to pass.

Constipation may be caused by:

- not eating enough fibre (that is roughage, found in foods such as wholemeal bread and cereals, fruit and vegetables)
- not drinking enough (you should drink at least six to eight cups of liquid a day)
- not being able to move around much
- some medicines (such as some painkillers)
- not being able to get to a toilet or putting off going (in the end, the feeling that you need to empty your bowel goes away)
- some neurological diseases, such as Parkinson's
- bowel diseases such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or colitis.

In severe cases, a hard bowel motion can lodge in the rectum and stretch and weaken the muscles, allowing watery stool to leak out. This looks like diarrhoea, but it isn't.

Diarrhoea

Frequent, urgent watery bowel motions can cause you to have an accident if you can't find the toilet in time. Diarrhoea has many possible causes, including the overuse of laxatives, a bacterial or viral infection, an irritable bowel or other bowel disease.

Bowel incontinence can also be caused by damage to the anal sphincter, nerve diseases, or muscle weakness (for example, after childbirth). Some women who suffer muscle damage in childbirth have no problems when their children are young but develop control problems later in life.

what next?

Constipation or any other change in bowel habits that continue for more than four to six weeks, or diarrhoea that continues for more than a few days, should always be reported to your GP.

Any bleeding should be reported sooner. See the Bladder and Bowel Foundation's booklet *Bowel problems: what to do if things go wrong* (see page 31).

Keep as active and mobile as you can, as this can keep your bowels healthy.



Checking for bowel cancer

i In England, you're eligible for free bowel screening every two years from the age of 60 until you're 69. In Wales and Northern Ireland the age range is 60–74, while in Scotland it's 50–74. You should automatically receive a test kit in the post from the NHS. Make sure you complete this test, as it can pick up signs of cancer before you experience any symptoms. Spotting cancer early means it's more likely to be treated successfully.

If you notice anything unusual in your bowel habits before you reach this age, or between screenings, don't ignore it – go to your GP. It's always better to get it checked out than to sit at home worrying about it. Bowel cancer symptoms can include rectal bleeding and unexplained weight loss.

i If you have reached the age of 60 and haven't received a kit, call the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening helpline on 0800 707 6060. In Scotland, call 0800 0121 833. In Wales, call Bowel Screening Wales on 0800 294 3370. In Northern Ireland, call the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme on 0800 015 2514.

what next?

For more information about bowel cancer and early warning signs, see the NHS Be Clear on Cancer web page at www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer. You can also find useful information by visiting the Beating Bowel Cancer website at www.beatingbowelcancer.org

i In Scotland, visit the Scottish Bowel Screening Programme website at www.bowelscreening.scot.nhs.uk. In Wales, look up 'cancer' on the NHS Direct Wales website at www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia. In Northern Ireland, visit the Northern Ireland Bowel Cancer Screening Programme website at www.cancerscreening.hscni.net

What can I do to help myself?

There are some minor lifestyle changes you could try that may help you when you first experience symptoms of bladder or bowel problems.

- Drink normally, unless you're advised otherwise, as cutting down on liquids will usually make urinary incontinence worse, not better. Aim to drink at least six to eight cups of liquid each day. However, if you're struggling with nocturia, the need to pass urine more than twice during the night, try restricting how much you drink in the few hours before bedtime.
- If you notice that tea, coffee or cola make your bladder symptoms worse, cut down on these drinks or try decaffeinated versions. Drinking too many fizzy drinks, alcoholic drinks or drinks with artificial sweeteners in them may also cause problems. Pay attention to what you're drinking and you will soon notice which ones affect you.
- Avoid constipation by eating plenty of fibre-rich foods and making sure you're drinking plenty of liquid (see page 10). Constipation can also put pressure on the bladder.
- Keep as active and mobile as you can - as this can help keep your bowels healthy. For tips on keeping fit and mobile, see our free guide *Healthy living*. Contact your local council or Age UK to find out what activities are available in your area.
- Ask your pharmacist or GP whether any medicines that you are taking could be disturbing the bladder. For example, water tablets (diuretics) make it fill more often.

**what
next?**

There is more information about treatments for particular types of bladder and bowel problems on page 18.

‘I only wish I’d known sooner that there was something simple I could do to resolve the problem.’

When Audrey started passing urine without enough warning, she thought it was just an inevitable part of ageing.

‘In my early 60s I started finding it difficult to get to the toilet in time, and I often passed water unexpectedly when I sneezed, coughed, or laughed. I love going out for walks with my friends, but I had to stop because I never knew when I would need to get to the ladies quickly. I bought some incontinence pads so that I could still go out to the shops, but I became very self-conscious.

‘I felt too embarrassed to talk to my friends about it and just assumed it was something that you have to put up with when you get to my age. Eventually I plucked up the courage to go to my GP.

‘She examined me and said that I had stress incontinence, and that a lot of people my age have the same problem, especially women. She told me that I should try pelvic floor exercises and explained how. It was tricky at first as you have to make sure you’re exercising the right muscles, but I soon got the hang of it. I did them several times a day, as I was told to, and noticed an improvement after only a few weeks.

‘Now I’m much more confident, and I can go out for walks again. I only wish I’d known sooner that there was something simple I could do to resolve the problem.’





Seeking professional help

If you have a bladder or bowel control problem, you may feel too embarrassed to tell anybody. But talking about it, especially with a health professional, is the best first step you can take to help yourself. You don't have to cope alone.

A health professional can assess your symptoms, identify the cause, and discuss what treatment or exercises may help tackle your continence problems. Talking things through with friends and family can also help you feel less alone.

Talk to your GP. They will want to hear about your symptoms. They should examine you and then discuss your treatment options. Your GP may arrange for you to see a district nurse in the surgery or at home.

Alternatively, you may be able to refer yourself directly to your local NHS continence service for an assessment and to discuss your treatment options. Here you will see a specialist nurse, often called a continence adviser. There is also a range of other professionals you might be referred to, for example a physiotherapist or an occupational therapist. To find your local service, ask at your GP practice or call the Bladder and Bowel Foundation (see page 31).

To qualify for incontinence products provided by the NHS, you're likely to need to meet criteria set out by your local NHS. Your GP or continence adviser may suggest a referral to a hospital specialist, who may want to carry out tests to help diagnose your problem.

What will a professional need to know?

A healthcare professional may ask you some of the questions below. We've left space for you to make notes here. It's a good idea to keep a diary of your experiences of bladder or bowel problems, so that you can give the healthcare professional detailed information (see page 29). You may also be asked for a urine sample, or your bladder may be tested.

- When did your bladder or bowel problems start?

.....

- How often does leakage happen?

.....

- How much is lost?

.....

- How are you dealing with it?

.....

- How much, what and when are you drinking?

.....

- Can you feel when your bladder and bowel are full?

.....

- How often do you use the toilet?

.....

NICE - the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence - produces guidance about what to expect from the NHS if you have bladder or bowel problems and explains what various tests and procedures involve (see page 33).

Common treatments for bladder and bowel problems

Your GP or other health professional will suggest different solutions, depending on the type of bladder or bowel problem you're experiencing. Here are some of the most common types of treatment prescribed.

Stress incontinence

A specialist nurse or continence physiotherapist may be asked to help you with some exercises called pelvic floor exercises. If you find it difficult to do these, there is equipment that may be used to help you learn which muscles to use. Sometimes mild electrical stimulation is used to help exercise and strengthen the muscles.

There is a medicine available for women with a moderate to severe stress incontinence problem. This works best when used with pelvic floor exercises. Ask your doctor for more details. Losing weight may also help control stress incontinence and, if you smoke, try to stop – coughing may make you leak more often.

If leakage is severe, or there is a prolapse (a prolapse is when muscles supporting the bladder, urethra, uterus or rectum are weakened causing these organs to slip), an operation may be suggested. You won't be pushed into choosing this option, but for many people it does provide a cure.

Overactive bladder

Bladder retraining is the best treatment to help with urge incontinence. Pelvic floor exercises may also help you to hold on. If these don't work, your doctor may prescribe medicine that can help to calm an overactive bladder.

Overflow incontinence

Once the reason for the inability of your bladder to empty completely has been identified, a range of options can be discussed. A common cause in men is an enlarged prostate gland.

Constipation

In addition to the self-help described on page 13, your doctor may prescribe medicines. Sometimes suppositories or an enema are needed to clear severe constipation. Don't use medicines you have bought yourself for long periods. See your doctor if constipation persists.

what next?



Visit the NHS Choices website for more information about incontinence, including treatments. In Scotland, visit the NHS Inform website, or call the helpline. In Wales, visit the NHS Direct Wales website. (Contact details for all these organisations are on page 33.)

A health professional can assess your symptoms, identify the cause, and discuss what treatment or exercises may help.



Making life easier

You may find that your continence problems stem from practical issues, rather than a medical issue. This is sometimes called functional incontinence.

For example, if you have walking difficulties you may find it difficult to reach the toilet in time. Or if your fingers are stiff, it can be tricky to get clothes out of the way quickly enough. Some people find it difficult or uncomfortable to get on and off a low toilet. A shortage of public toilets can also lead to problems when you're out. If there is also an urgent need to pass urine, incontinence may result from any of these problems.

If you're experiencing these sorts of problems, here are some practical measures you can take that may make things easier for you.

Improving access to the toilet

If the incontinence is caused by problems with getting around, special rails may make it easier to get on and off the toilet. These grab rails can be freestanding or mounted on the wall. Adding a raised seat to the toilet may make it easier to sit down if you have stiff hips. If you have difficulty getting about, a walking aid or stairlift may help you to get to the toilet in time.

Alternatives to the toilet

If you can't reach the toilet easily, a commode may be useful. These are available in a variety of designs. Many have a lid and look like an ordinary chair when not in use. You can get hand-held urinals, for men and women, which can be used in bed or sitting in a chair.

For more advice on special equipment, speak to your district nurse or continence adviser, or contact the Disabled Living Foundation (see page 32).

Clothing

Clothes can get in the way when you use the toilet. Many women find stockings easier to manage than tights, and full skirts easier to get out of the way than tight ones. The more layers of clothes you wear, the longer it takes to remove them when you go to the toilet. Try choosing clothing with elasticated waists, or adapt clothes so that they fasten with Velcro instead of zips and buttons.

Men may find loose boxer shorts easier to manage than Y-fronts.

Toilet queues

The Bladder and Bowel Foundation offers a Just Can't Wait toilet card for a suggested donation of £5, so that you don't have to queue if you're out and need to use a toilet quickly. You can order one by calling the Bladder and Bowel Foundation or via their website (see page 31). The card states clearly that the holder has a medical condition that requires the urgent use of a toilet.

Being prepared

Having a bladder or bowel control problem can be extremely embarrassing, but try not to let it stop you from going out. Instead, try to think of practical solutions to problems that might arise. For example, if you think you will leak while you're out, you could take some spare pads and pants with you. You should always get advice from a professional about which products are best for you, before you start using them long term. A scented bag for soiled pants or pads could be useful if you're worried about smell.

Travel

If you're going on a long journey with family or friends, and you know that you will need to use the toilet frequently, let them know beforehand. That way, you can identify potential stopping points and maybe plan for extra stops so you won't have to worry about accidental leaks. You'll feel more in control if you tell people in advance.

what next?

For more ideas to help you adapt to a bladder and/or bowel weakness, see the Bladder and Bowel Foundation booklet *Only when I laugh, cough or sneeze* (currently only available online) and factsheet *Travelling with confidence* (see page 31). You can also get advice from the Bladder and Bowel Foundation's helpline call-back service (see page 31).

Incontinence products

Incontinence does not always respond completely to treatment, but the right products should help you to manage the problem and let you carry on with a normal life.

There are a variety of pads, pants and other products available. The following are unisex:

- washable products such as re-usable pads, which often come as part of a pair of pants
- disposable pads are held in place by close-fitting pants, although these tend to be more expensive
- disposable pants, or all-in-one pads with plastic backing and adhesive patches to seal the sides, are generally more suitable for heavy incontinence.

For men there is also a range of appliances that fit over the penis and collect urine into a bag strapped to the leg. A ‘penile sheath’ is the most popular version of this and is available on prescription. Men can also wear pads and pants, or special dribble pouches.

You can also get a bed or chair protector in the form of disposable or washable pads.

If you are assessed as eligible for incontinence products, your district nurse or continence service should arrange the supply free of charge on the NHS. Your health professional will explain what is available in your region, as it varies.

You can buy many of these products in pharmacies and supermarkets, but it’s important to seek professional advice before using them permanently (see page 16). Supermarkets and pharmacies will not charge you VAT on incontinence products, but if you’re buying products online or by mail order, you may need to fill out a VAT exemption form. Shop around before you buy products, as prices vary.

If you are having problems with extra laundry, speak to your district nurse to see if there’s any help available.

what next?

Visit www.continenceproductadvisor.org to find out more about the range of products available and use the online tool to help you decide which type would suit you. Age UK Trading* also provides a range of incontinence products in partnership with Choice Shops. To find out more about what products are available and the costs, visit the website www.ageukincontinence.co.uk or call 0800 849 8032.

*Age UK Trading Limited is registered in England and Wales No: 01102972.
Registered office: Tavis House, 1-6 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9NA.
VAT NO: 710 384366. Age UK Trading Limited is a trading company of Age UK (charity No: 1128267) which donates its net profits to that charity.

Personal hygiene and comfort

Skin care

Washing regularly and drying the area carefully with a soft towel helps to keep your skin healthy. When you change your pad, you may want to use a disposable wipe to remove any residue. Change pads regularly. A simple barrier cream such as zinc and castor oil applied thinly will protect your skin. If your skin becomes broken, consult your district nurse or doctor immediately. A balanced diet and plenty of fluids can also help maintain healthy skin.

If your skin becomes red or sore, make sure that any pad or appliance fits properly and isn't rubbing. You could also check that you haven't developed an allergy to something, for example a washing powder or cream, or part of a pad or appliance.

Avoiding smell

Fresh urine should not smell offensive. If it does, there may be an infection. Urine also starts to smell when it is exposed to air for long periods. Good-quality pads help to absorb some smell, but always change wet clothes as soon as possible. Keep wet clothes or sheets in a bucket with a lid until washed. Mop up any spills quickly and allow fresh air to circulate.

Smell from bowel incontinence is more difficult to hide. Change soiled pads as soon as possible and put them into an airtight container or sealed bag.

Support from social care and health services

If you have bladder and bowel problems, the cause should always be identified, whether you're at home, living in a care home, or during a stay in hospital.

Bladder and bowel issues should never be treated as inevitable. Always seek advice and support. It's important to talk about them with your GP, the manager of the care home you live in, or the person who is discharging you from hospital, so your continence needs can be assessed.

If you have continence needs or develop problems while you're in hospital, these should be considered during your discharge assessment and their management built into your discharge plan.

If problems develop while you're in a care home, the cause should be identified by your GP or district nurse and treatment added to your care plan.

If you're found eligible for continence products, you should not have to pay for them. The NHS should arrange for a supply to be delivered to you on a regular basis. If you want to pay for pads yourself, get advice from the Bladder and Bowel Foundation or Continence Product Advisor (see pages 31 and 32).

If you're unhappy with the way your continence needs are met by carers, or by staff at your care home or at the hospital, you have the right to complain. Start by having an informal discussion with staff or the managers of the organisation providing your care. A relative or friend can make the complaint on your behalf. If you feel your concerns haven't been addressed, you might want to raise a formal complaint. The organisation must provide you with a copy of its complaints procedure on request.

For more information on the procedures for making complaints about a hospital or health service, see our free factsheet *Resolving problems and making a complaint about NHS care*. In Wales, see Age Cymru's free factsheet *Resolving problems and making a complaint about NHS care in Wales*.



For more information about making a complaint about care provided or arranged by social services, see our free factsheet *How to resolve problems and make a complaint about social care*. In Wales, see Age Cymru's free factsheet *Local authority assessment for community care services in Wales*.



what next?

In England, if you would like support to make a complaint about the NHS, contact your local Healthwatch (see page 32) for details of who can help you. In Scotland, contact the Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS) through your local Citizens Advice Bureau (visit www.cas.org.uk). For more information, see the PASS website at www.patientadvicescotland.org.uk. In Wales, contact your Community Health Council on 0845 644 7814 for equivalent support.



Helping someone with dementia who has continence issues

Someone who has dementia may forget to visit the toilet, or be unable to communicate their needs. They may not recognise the normal triggers that tell us we need to go to the toilet, or may not remember the way to the toilet, or recognise it when they get there.

In these cases, regular gentle reminders might be needed. If the person you're caring for forgets where the toilet is, a notice or picture on the door might help. A regular routine can help them, or you may need to learn to recognise the signs that mean they need the toilet, and discreetly encourage them to go at those times.

If this doesn't help or you are having difficulties, talk to your GP or district nurse.

what next?

Alzheimer's Society can offer further advice. In Scotland, contact Alzheimer Scotland. (Contact details for both organisations are on page 31.)

Claiming benefits

If you have a physical or mental disability and have difficulty getting about, or need supervision or help when carrying out personal care tasks, you might be eligible for Attendance Allowance (AA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP). These are non-means-tested benefits, so you can claim them regardless of your income or any savings you have.

- ① PIP doesn't yet apply in Northern Ireland, so if you're under 65 you should make a claim for Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

Having incontinence issues will not necessarily mean you can get AA or PIP but you may be eligible if you need help with tasks such as getting to and from and using the toilet, changing your continence pads, or if you need to be reminded to go to the toilet.

For more information about who qualifies for disability benefits, see our benefits guide *More money in your pocket: a guide to claiming benefits for people over pension age*.

- ① In Wales, Age Cymru offer their own version of this guide.

what next?

For information on claiming AA, call the Attendance Allowance helpline (see page 31). For information on claiming PIP, call the PIP helpline (see page 34). In Northern

- ① Ireland, call the Disability and Carers Service for information on claiming DLA (see page 32).

Bladder diary

Keeping a bladder diary can help your healthcare professional understand how your bladder is working (see page 17). Use the space below to record:

- what you drank, how much and when
- how many times you passed urine each day and night
- how urgent the need was to pass urine
- any incidences of bladder leakage and what led up to it
- any incontinence products used.

Day 1

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Day 2

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Day 3

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Useful organisations

Age UK

We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65

Lines are open seven days a week from 8am to 7pm

www.ageuk.org.uk

Call Age UK Advice to find out whether there is a local Age UK near you, and to order free copies of our information guides and factsheets.

In Wales, contact

Age Cymru: 0800 022 3444

www.agecymru.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact

Age NI: 0808 808 7575

www.ageni.org

In Scotland, contact **Age Scotland** by calling Silver Line Scotland: 0800 470 80 90 (This is a partnership between The Silver Line and Age Scotland)

www.agescotland.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society

Offers advice, information and support in England and Wales to people with dementia, their families and carers.

Helpline: 0300 222 1122

www.alzheimers.org.uk

www.alzheimers.org.uk/wales

In Scotland, contact **Alzheimer Scotland**

Helpline: 0808 808 3000

www.alzscot.org

In Northern Ireland, contact **Alzheimer's NI**

Helpline: 028 9066 4100

www.alzheimers.org.uk/northernireland

Attendance Allowance helpline

Information about how to claim Attendance Allowance.

Tel: 0345 605 6055

Textphone: 0845 604 5312

Bladder and Bowel Foundation

Provides a range of resources for people with bladder and bowel problems. Runs a national helpline with a call-back service, offering confidential advice from a specialist nurse, who can also give you details of your nearest continence clinic. You can order the booklets and factsheets over the phone for free, or sign up as a registered supporter to download them from the website.

Tel: 0845 345 0165 (helpline)

Tel: 01536 533 255 (general enquiries)

www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

Continence Product Advisor

Website offering independent advice about continence products.

www.continenceproductadvisor.org

Disability and Carers Service

Information about how to claim Disability Living Allowance in Northern Ireland.

Tel: 028 9060 6182

Textphone: 0800 243 787

Disabled Living Foundation

Helps older and disabled people live independently at home and provides advice on equipment such as commodes and urinals.

Tel: 0300 999 0004

www.dlf.org.uk

Disability Rights UK

Operates a National Key Scheme that offers people with disabilities independent access to about 7,000 locked public toilets nationwide.

Tel: 020 7250 8181

www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Healthwatch

A local Healthwatch provides information, advice and support to users of health services in your area. It can also put you in contact with your local NHS Complaints Advocacy service. In Wales, there are Complaints Advocacy Services run by local Community Health Councils.

To find your local Healthwatch call 03000 683 000 or visit www.healthwatch.co.uk

NHS Choices

Provides information about health conditions, treatments and services in England.

www.nhs.uk

In Wales, visit **NHS Direct Wales**

Tel: 0845 4647

www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

Visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia to find out more about conditions from a patient's perspective.

In Scotland, visit **NHS Inform**

Tel: 0800 22 44 88

www.nhsinform.co.uk

In Northern Ireland, visit www.nidirect.gov.uk

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

Provides guidance on being healthy and treating illnesses and conditions.

You can download:

- *Urinary incontinence: the management of urinary incontinence in women*
<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG171>
- *Faecal incontinence: the management of faecal incontinence in adults*
<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG49>
- *The management of lower urinary tract symptoms in men*
<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG97>

Click on the versions labelled 'Information for the public'.

The information in these documents about treatment available on the NHS only applies to England and Wales.

PIP Helpline

Information about how to claim Personal Independence Payment.

Tel: 0345 850 3322

Textphone: 0345 601 667

Can you help Age UK?

Please complete the donation form below with a gift of whatever you can afford and return to: RSXZ-KTTS-KSHT, Age UK, Tavis House, 1-6 Tavistock Square, LONDON WC1H 9NA. Alternatively, you can phone 0800 169 87 87 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/donate. If you prefer, you can donate directly to one of our national or local partners. Thank you.

Personal details

Title:	Initials:	Surname:
Address: _____ _____		
Postcode: _____		
Tel:	Email:	

By providing your email address and/or mobile number you are agreeing to us contacting you in these ways. You may contact us at any time to unsubscribe from our communications.

Your gift

I would like to make a gift of: £

I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to Age UK

Card payment

I wish to pay by (please tick) MasterCard Visa CAF CharityCard
 Maestro American Express

(Maestro only)

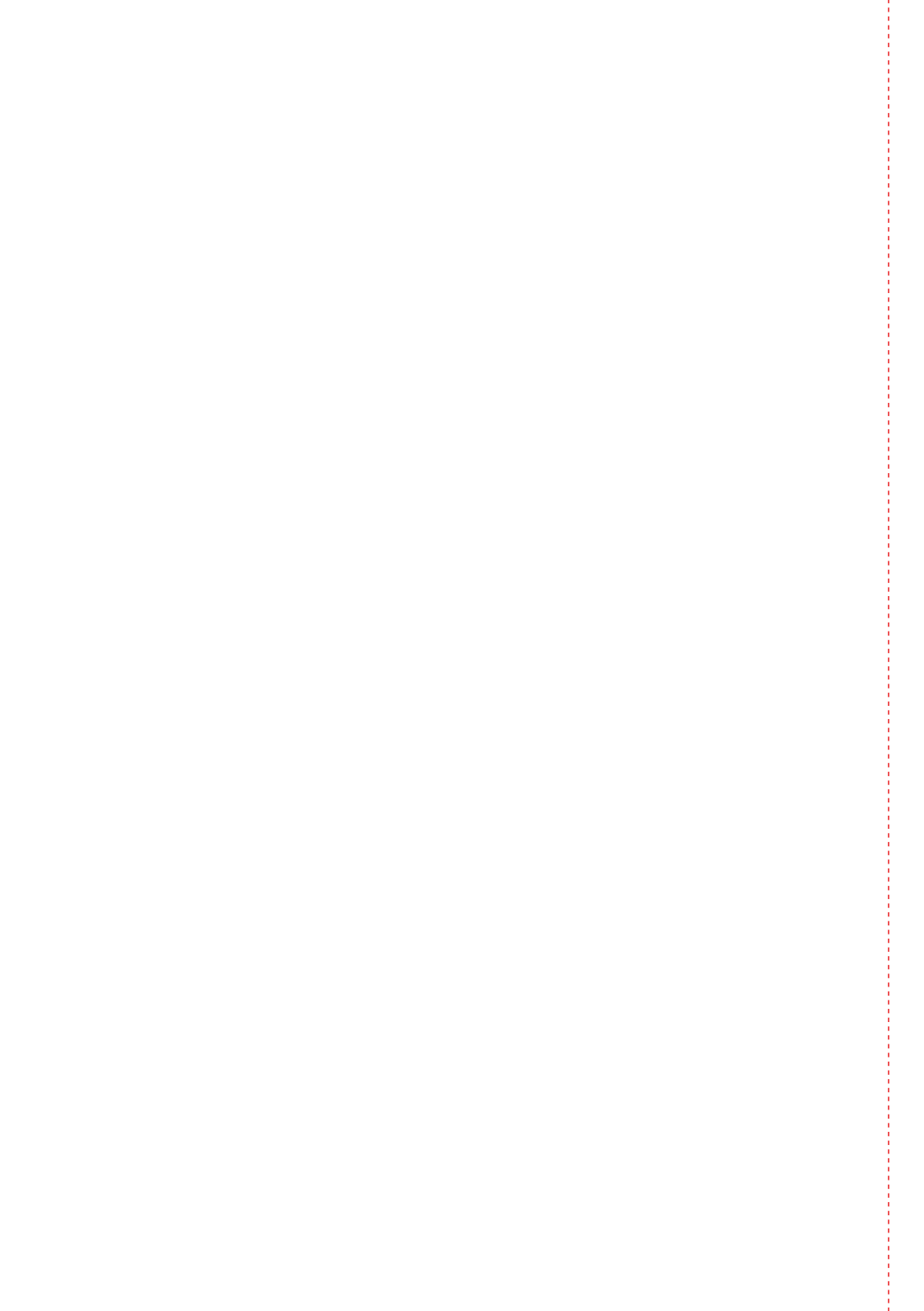
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Gift aid declaration

(please tick) Yes, I want Age UK and its partner organisations* to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as gift aid donations. I confirm I pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity will reclaim on my donations in the tax year. Date: ___/___/___ (please complete). *Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI



We will use the information you have supplied to communicate with you according to data protection guidelines. Age UK (registered charity number 1128267) comprises the charity, its group of companies and national partners (Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI). If you would prefer not to hear from them or carefully selected third parties, let us know by phoning 0800 107 8977.



Supporting the work of Age UK

Age UK aims to enable all older people to love later life. We provide vital services, support, information and advice to thousands of older people across the UK.

In order to offer free information guides like this one, Age UK relies on the generosity of its supporters. If you would like to help us, here are a few ways you could get involved:

1 Make a donation
To make a donation to Age UK, simply complete the enclosed donation form, call us on **0800 169 8787** or visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involved**

2 Donate items to our shops
By donating an unwanted item to one of our shops, you can help generate vital funds to support our work. To find your nearest Age UK shop, visit **www.ageuk.org.uk** and enter your postcode into the ‘What does Age UK do in your area?’ search function. Alternatively, call us on **0800 169 8787**

3 Leave a gift in your will
Nearly half the money we receive from supporters come from gifts left in wills. To find out more about how you could help in this way, please call the Age UK legacy team on **020 3033 1421** or email **legacies@ageuk.org.uk**

Thank you!

What should I do now?

For more information on the issues covered in this guide, or to order any of our publications, please call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65** or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/healthandwellbeing

Our publications are also available in large print and audio formats.

The following Age UK information guides may be useful:

- *Adapting your home*
- *Healthy living*
- *Home safety checker*

The Age UK Group offers a wide range of products and services specially designed for people in later life. For more information, please call **0800 169 18 19**.

If contact details for your local Age UK are not in the box below, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.

