

Incontinence, Toileting, and Skin Care

Protecting comfort, dignity, and skin health

Easy guide for families

Why this matters

Bladder and bowel problems are common in older adults and can be exhausting for families. A respectful routine, good hygiene, and skin protection can lower stress and prevent infections and skin breakdown.

What you may notice

- Urine leakage, urgency, or accidents
- Constipation or stool leakage
- Red, sore, or damp skin
- Getting up often at night to toilet
- Embarrassment, resistance, or rushing to the bathroom

Daily care at home

1. Offer regular toileting, especially after meals and before bed.
2. Use easy-to-remove clothing and keep the bathroom path clear.
3. Clean the skin gently after accidents and pat dry, do not rub hard.
4. Use moisture barriers or other skin products if recommended.
5. Encourage fluids and bowel-friendly foods unless restricted.

When to call the doctor

- Pain, burning, fever, or foul-smelling urine
- No bowel movement for several days or hard stools
- Skin redness that does not improve quickly
- Blood in urine or stool
- Sudden new incontinence or worsening confusion

Call 911 now if...

- Severe belly pain or vomiting with constipation
- Inability to urinate with pain and swelling
- Large amount of blood in urine or stool
- Severe weakness or confusion with fever

Questions for the care team

- Could this be caused by infection, constipation, or medicine side effects?
- Which products are safest for the skin?
- Should we try timed toileting or pelvic floor exercises?
- When do we need a wound or continence specialist?

Quick daily checklist

- Toileting offered on schedule
- Skin cleaned and dried gently
- Barrier cream used if needed
- Bowel pattern tracked
- Fluids encouraged
- Bathroom route kept safe

Safety first

Approach toileting with privacy and calm. Protecting dignity is part of good care, not an extra step.

Caregiver reminder

Incontinence can be a sign of infection, constipation, medicine side effects, or mobility trouble. New accidents deserve attention, especially when they appear suddenly.

