



Incontinence

Alzheimer's

As Alzheimer's disease and other dementias progress to the middle and late stages, there will likely be issues with loss of bowel and bladder control, also known as incontinence. The person's brain gets a sign about the need to go, but the brain forgets how to use the toilet.

Why this happens:

- Diminished thought for the need to go to the toilet
- Not able to wait for the right time and place to go to the toilet
- Slow to use the toilet due to being distracted
- Hard time manipulating clothing (like zippers, belts or underwear) before toileting
- Problems communicating the need to use the toilet
- Hard time finding or using the toilet

Know that your person may be more likely to have problems linked with incontinence like infection, constipation, hormonal changes, or prostate enlargement. Get treatment for medical conditions first, then try these tips.



Tips

Toileting

- Learn your person's usual habits
- Help the person to use the toilet routinely
- Start a plan for toileting
- Cue with words that are well known with toileting, such as "pee" or "tinkle"
- Notice the behavioral expressions or cues indicating a need to go
- Make sure there is good lighting for toileting
- Install a brightly colored toilet seat
- Give clothes that are easy to get on or off
- Offer 6-8 glasses of water daily and end fluids by 6:00 pm
- Limit caffeine
- To prevent infection, keep your person clean and dry

Products

- For comfort, use padded toilet seating
- For safety, put in grab bars and non-slip floors
- Think about using flushable wipes or no-rinse soap products
- Think about using creams or ointments that make a protective barrier
- Use products like washable briefs, pads, and disposable briefs

If things you've tried don't seem to be working, don't be afraid to ask for help from medical providers, durable medical equipment distributors or other caregivers.

While incontinence is not pleasant, it can be handled well with time and patience to find the right plan and answers.



Banner.

Alzheimer's Institute &
Sun Health Research Institute

For more information, visit BannerHealth.com/Alzheimers or tune in to our podcast, *Dementia Untangled*