

SKIN CARE, ABSORBENT PRODUCTS, AND ODOR CONTROL

The presence of urine on the skin can cause significant skin irritation resulting in redness, itching and discomfort. If left untreated, infection and skin breakdown can occur. It is possible to improve the situation by following a few simple steps. Always talk to your doctor or health care provider about your condition and get his/her suggestions. Persistent problems may require medication to cure.

The following are tips to help keep your skin healthy:

- Drink plenty of water. Concentrated urine is more irritating to both the skin and the bladder.
- Use pads/protection specifically designed to absorb urine. Change them often for optimum skin health. Wear cotton underwear and do not use menstrual pads whenever possible.
- Do not wear protection at nighttime or during times when you do not experience leakage.
- Wash the area with clear water and pat dry or use a blow dryer on the cool setting. Drying the skin is important because irritation is increased by constant moisture.
- Skin protection is essential if urine leakage is continuous or if skin irritation is present.
- Protection is usually in the form of a moisture barrier ointment that is applied to clean dry skin. Common barrier protection ointments such as A and D Ointment®, Bag Balm® or Vaseline® are available over the counter. These should be used with your physicians' approval. Ask about proper application techniques.
- Women should avoid wearing nylon underpants and pantyhose directly against their skin, cotton underpants are preferable. Women should also avoid colored or perfumed toilet tissue, sanitary napkins and laundry detergents because the dyes can be irritating to the area.

ODOR CONTROL

Some foods can cause urine to smell bad. While the most notable of these foods is asparagus, other foods may also affect the way your urine smells. If however, you notice that your urine has a strong odor and you can rule out your diet as the cause you should see a physician to have a urine test done. Your physician will check for a bladder infection that is another common cause of foul smelling urine. Urinary tract infections must be dealt with immediately.

In addition to foods, some medications may cause the urine to discolor or have an unusual odor. Some of these medications are taken for bladder infection or for urine tests. If your urine has a particular odor or color, consult the pharmacist who filled the doctor's prescription or ask your doctor.