

Categories of Incontinence Products

There are two main categories of incontinence aids to consider when choosing the right product for your needs: those that work with traditional underwear and those that replace it. Within each category is a number of choices, so decide based on brand, cost, and special features.

Here are the differences:

- **Pads, guards, and liners** are inserts that secure to undergarments with an adhesive strip. They offer less bulky protection and are easy to remove and replace when soiled. These products are very effective and can handle varying degrees of incontinence, so they're a great low-profile solution for those suffering from mild incontinence. Try Prevail Bladder Control Pads, Tena Pads, and Attends Guards. Another option is a belted shield or undergarment such as the Depend Belted Shield. These products combine a pad or liner with a belt or strap that can be worn with or without regular underwear. This is also a less-bulky alternative to disposable underwear or briefs.
- **Protective underwear** describes disposable pull-ups and reusable underwear. Each offers varying degrees of absorbency, moisture wicking capability, and odor control. Tear-away sides allow easy removal, and their full-profile coverage gives a high degree of leak protection. Examples include Tena Protective Underwear, Tranquility Daytime Disposable Underwear, and Prevail Underwear.
- **Disposable briefs** are more commonly known as adult diapers. These are highly absorbent and utilize side fasteners so that they're applied from front to back, rather than through the legs like protective underwear. Tena Briefs and [Attends Briefs](#) both offer great absorbency with a comfortable, breathable outer layer.

Incontinence Products and Limited Mobility

With aging comes many bodily changes, including slower reaction time; difficulty seeing, hearing, or remembering; and, for some people, loss of bowel or bladder control. Aging of the sphincter muscle, which is the opening and closing mechanism in the rectum that regulates waste passage, can result in less effective control and subsequent accidents. Also, the tone of the muscles and ligaments that define the pelvic floor can diminish with age, contributing to bladder or bowel incontinence. Impaired neuromuscular control as a result of stroke or other medical conditions can lead to these problems as well.

Undergarments equipped to handle either regular or sudden bowel movements or loss of bladder control are an integral part of maintaining quality of life for older individuals experiencing incontinence, especially those who need the help of a caregiver. A product such as a Tena brief is one example. This [adult diaper](#) is

available in a variety of absorbencies, all of which provide a high degree of protection, easy changing for those with limited mobility or their caregivers, and a soft, woven backsheet for wearer comfort and dignity—which is well-deserved.

Technology of Absorbency

Like with most consumer products, the technology of incontinence protection has gotten better and better over the years. While discretion and wearability will always be important, what's even more crucial for those with incontinence is their effectiveness at drawing moisture from the body and keeping odors at bay. After all, maintaining skin health by keeping the area dry and making sure the smell of urine or feces doesn't become noticeable to others are essential to maintaining quality of life, both physical and emotional.

The Peach Mat absorbent core found in Tranquility briefs is an example of the advanced technology being used in today's incontinence products. The peach-colored mat inside the shell is actually a contoured absorbent core that's designed to provide odor control and maximum protection against wetness by neutralizing the pH of urine. Also, [Molicare](#) products boast a high-tech three-part absorbent core, and Prevail pads and underwear contain a "Quick Wick" strip that's designed to pull moisture away from the body quickly.

No matter which product you choose, rest assured that the technology deployed by each will help keep you comfortable and dry.

Washable or Disposable Undergarments: Which Is Best for Me?

There are many different kinds of incontinence aids out there. Which undergarment product you choose depends both on your unique needs and your personal preference. Start by asking yourself or your caregiver whether you should use disposable or washable absorbent undergarments.

Both options come with pros and cons, depending on your situation. For example, washable underpants tend to be quite soft and comfortable and feel very similar to regular underwear; however, they're less absorbent than disposable options. Washable undergarments might be right for you if you experience part-time incontinence and don't require heavy-duty protection.

In addition to their convenience, disposable undergarments use advanced technology to absorb liquid and control odor, making them a great option for those who experience incontinence more frequently or require a high degree of absorption.

If you still can't decide between the two, it's always possible to supplement the protection of a reusable undergarment with disposable pads or liners as needed. The best way to find out which incontinence aid best

meets your needs and complements your lifestyle is to try out different kinds. To do this, either purchase in small quantities or purchase sample packs.

Support for Those with Incontinence

It's a hard reality that aging often brings some degree of decline, be it in energy level, mobility, overall health, or independence. While old age isn't necessarily accompanied by incontinence, it's certainly not an uncommon problem.

For some people, decreased bladder or bowel control is symbolic of decline. This can spark a number of emotions, including embarrassment, fear, and frustration. The good news is that there's all kinds of help out there, from products designed to deal with the physical effects of incontinence to emotional support networks. While it is important to take measures to deal with the physical manifestations of incontinence, the individual's emotional needs are often overlooked. Incontinence can cause anxiety, resulting in social avoidance, fear of intimacy, and depression.

If you experience incontinence, seeking emotional support is just as important as discussing treatment options with your healthcare provider. When dealing with difficult situations, one of the biggest comforts is knowing you're not alone. One of the greatest advantages of the Internet is the ability it gives users to connect with other people. Use it to seek out others who face the problem of incontinence and know that you're not alone. Check out the following resources:

www.incontinencesupport.org www.healthcentral.com www.nationalincontinence.com/s/UI [Resources](#)