



## PRACTICAL HELP – HYGIENE

Many people who suffer with bladder and bowel problems worry about odour and that others will be aware of their incontinence. In many cases others are not aware of the odour but individuals are self conscious. Use the guidance below to help you manage concerns around personal and home hygiene.

### Odours

Odours can be minimised by good personal hygiene; wearing protective garments or appliances designed to contain leaks from the bladder and bowel; promptly disposing of soiled items in air-tight containers; and ensuring good general ventilation.



Deodorising agents such as Neutradol, diffusers and scented candles placed around the house and in the toilet area can be useful. However, it is better to avoid heavily scented sprays, as these only mask unpleasant odours.

### Personal care

A daily bath or shower ensuring you wash the crotch and bottom area. Following a leakage or changing a pad is important. Always dry your skin well with a soft towel. Moist alcohol-free toilet tissues, are handy alternatives if you are away from home.

It is best to avoid scented soaps, talcum powder and oil based creams as they can irritate the skin and reduce effective absorbency of pads.

If you are wearing incontinence pads or appliances make sure they are a snug fit to avoid leaks. Close fitting underwear will keep pads close to the skin and keep odour to a minimum. Some products contain a built-in deodoriser. Urine does not have an odour until it has contact with the air or unless you have a urine infection. If you do have a leak, change the pad or appliance as soon as possible, putting the soiled items into an airtight container, such as a scented disposal bag, sandwich bag with tie or a bucket with a close fitting lid.



## **Stains**

Wearing dark coloured, easy to wash clothes and using coloured patterned bedding and towels will help to make stains less obvious. It is important to remember to wash any stained items as soon as possible as the stains may persist and will smell. Solid matter should be rinsed down the toilet before washing.

## **Deodorisers**

Neutradol available as a spray, gel, carpet powder available from selected chemists and supermarkets. Portable and wall mounted air purifiers and sprays are also readily available in supermarkets and online sites

## **Laundry**

Place soiled clothes or bedding into a bucket of cold water, or a washing machine on a pre-rinse programme. A concentrated biological powder or liquid may be helpful in getting rid of persistent stains, but check the fabric care guide on the container first. Avoid using bleach on coloured and patterned fabrics.

## **Beds and Chairs**

If an incontinence episode happens in a bed or chair then it is advisable to wipe the surfaces with a dilute detergent / disinfectant to remove stains and odour, avoiding embarrassment



If you would like further advice please contact the Bladder and Bowel UK National Confidential Helpline on 0161 607 8219 or email: [bladderandboweluk@disabledliving.co.uk](mailto:bladderandboweluk@disabledliving.co.uk)