Continence: A Matter of Dignity

Causes, Signs and Prevention

By

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction
Urinary Incontinence (UI) Defined

UI is simply defined as the involuntary or inappropriate loss of urine. In other words, incontinence is urine loss which happens when the person doesn’t want it to or doesn’t know it’s happening.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this program you will be able to:

- List the common causes of urinary incontinence (UI)
- Describe the potentially serious effects of not treating UI
- Recognize signs of a urinary tract infection
- Discuss effective ways to prevent or reduce episodes of UI and enhance dignity

Our goal is to help you provide care to reduce or prevent episodes of UI and enhance the dignity of those in your care.
Prevalence of UI

- 13 million Americans have UI
- 85% of them are women
- Almost 30% of persons over 65 and living in the community have UI
- 53% of homebound have UI
- 50-80% of LTC residents have UI

In 8 of 10 cases symptoms can be improved and function restored.

The Facts about UI

- Continence is normal; Incontinence is not
- Normal aging does not always cause incontinence
- When continence is impaired, many simple things can be done to restore or improve function

Mrs. Mendoza
Caring for UI is Important Because:

- Untreated or under-treated UI can cause:
  - Skin breakdown and infection
  - Falls and injuries

Mr. Phillips

Caring for UI is Important Because:

- Untreated or under treated UI can cause:
  - Depression/social withdrawal
  - Loss of dignity/lower quality of life
  - UTIs (urinary tract infections) → hospitalization → death
Structure of the Urinary Tract System

Contributors to UI: Age-Related Changes

- Overactive bladder muscle
- Enlarged prostate (BPH)
- Atrophic vaginitis and urethritis
- Reduced bladder capacity
- Increased post-void residual (PVR)
Contributors of UI: Injury and Disease

- Diabetes
- Damage to the: Brain, Spinal Cord and Bladder Injury

Mrs. Banks

Contributors to UI: Limitations in Function

- Ambulation
- Dressing

Mr. Williams
Contributors to UI
Bladder Irritants

- Artificial sweeteners
- Caffeine
- Alcohol

Mrs. Powell

Contributors to UI
Hydration & Physical Conditions

- Not enough fluid
- Too much fluid
- Fecal Impaction
- Acute Confusion
- Infections/Medical illness
UTI Symptoms in the Older Adult

- Increased Frequency
- Increased Urgency
- New or increased incontinence
- Urine odor or cloudiness
- Change in mental status

Acute Changes in Mental Status that may indicate UTI

- Sleepiness
- Lethargy
- Irritability or agitation
- New or increased confusion

Mr. Green
Things You Can Do for Older Adults with UI

☐ Keep a log of UI events
☐ Monitor toileting

Things You Can Do for Older Adults with UI

☐ Determine frequency of need
☐ Develop a schedule and prompt
The Banks’ Turning Point

Things You can Do: Scheduling

- Log actual number of “accidents” or “urinations”
- Based on log results - develop schedule
- Establishing and following a schedule can give a person confidence to do other things
Things You Can Do

- Encourage change in diet (avoiding caffeine, sweeteners, alcohol)
- Assist with
  - getting to the bathroom or commode
  - removing clothing
  - positioning urinal or bedpan

Mr. Williams’ Challenge
Mr. Williams’ Challenge

- Arthritis
- Personal Embarrassment
- Effect on Family
- Clothing with Elastic or Velcro Closures

Things You Can Do

- Make urinals available to men
- Prompt (suggest, encourage and remind) to toilet
- Encourage and motivate
- Change if incontinent

Mr. Samson
Skin Care

To prevent skin breakdown:
- Work towards improved continence
- Change incontinent garments promptly and clean perineum and buttocks
- Use a skin barrier
- Promptly report any change in skin

Product Use for UI

- Least restrictive
- Most dignified
  - Brief (diaper)
  - Regular underwear with liner
  - Change type of clothing used to reduce time
Final Case Scenario

- Ms. Hill has rheumatoid arthritis with severe deformities of her hands
- She has difficulty with such things as door knobs and buttons on her clothes

Mrs. Hill

Learning Objectives

Review

Can you now:
1. List the common causes of Urinary incontinence (UI)?
2. Describe the potentially serious effects of not treating UI?
3. Recognize signs of a UTI?
4. Discuss effective ways to prevent or reduce episodes of UI and enhance dignity?
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References and Resources


**References and Resources**


**Web sites:**

Collaborative to Support Urinary Incontinence and Women's Health: www.stressUI.org

National Association for Continence: www.nafc.org

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“Continence: A Matter of Dignity
Care of Chronic and Complex UI” is designed to follow this module (what you have learned in “Causes, Signs & Prevention”).