

## Managing Episodes of Incontinence

Incontinence often develops in the later stages of dementia but can occur at any time. If possible it is better to prevent episodes of incontinence occurring, (see our information sheet on Measures to Prevent Incontinence), but when they do happen here are some important things that can help.

A person with dementia may feel embarrassed and ashamed by their incontinence. Try not to be angry or critical in your approach to managing the situation. Remember it's not their fault and it's nothing for them, or you, to be ashamed of.

### **At home: -**

Quietly remove and replace any wet or soiled bed linen and gently remove any soiled or wet clothing.

Wash the skin with a soap-free cleanser and pat dry with a soft towel. (Soap affects the pH of the skin and, when combined with urine or faeces, makes it more vulnerable to breaking down and becoming sore Nursing Times 2002)

Apply a barrier cream to the area around the groin and buttocks to keep the skin moisturised, supple and protected from the irritation that urine can cause.

### **When planning a trip out: -**

It's useful to take some disposable gloves, wet wipes, barrier cream and also a change of clothing.

Find out where the public toilets are so if you do have to deal with an episode of incontinence you can find the nearest one quickly.

The general public can lack tolerance of incontinence and be quite disparaging to people with dementia. If you experience that behaviour try to ignore it; it's their problem, not yours.

And always remember you are not alone. Your GP, district nurses and local continence advisory nurses can give help, advice and suggestions on managing incontinence.

If you need any help or guidance, want to find out about other activities and services, or just need someone to talk to who understands your situation, Dementia Friendly Keighley is here for you.

You can call us on **07452 773788** between **10am and 2pm daily**, text (**SMS**) or **WhatsApp 'CALL BACK'** on the same number or leave a message outside of these hours and we will call back as soon as possible. Please note: Times and days of our activities and services are subject to change, so please call for up to date information.

