

TOPIC:

Bowel and Bladder Function After Stroke



Bowel and Bladder After Stroke



- Bowel and bladder incontinence are common after stroke
- Can be a result of damage to the part of the brain that controls bowel and bladder function
- Many factors (e.g. mobility) can increase bowel and bladder issues
- People with bowel and bladder issues may:
 - require frequent trips to the bathroom
 - not make it to the bathroom in time
 - have issues with urinary tract infections

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Smart Tips
for Stroke Care

What you should know:

- ✓ > 45% of persons with stroke in LTC experience incontinence
- ✓ Bowel incontinence is less common than bladder incontinence
- ✓ Women have higher rates of incontinence after stroke than men
- ✓ Incontinence after stroke is associated with poor outcomes
- ✓ Incontinence can lead to:
 - skin breakdown
 - pain
 - dehydration
 - infections
 - falls

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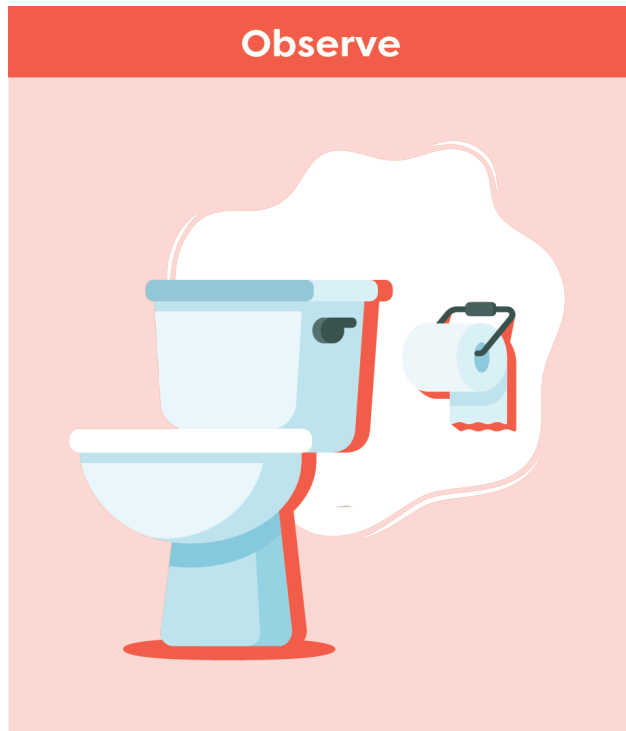
What you should know:

- ✓ Incontinence may lead to isolation and issues with depression
- ✓ Reducing incontinence can improve quality of life and self-esteem
- ✓ Increased awareness of incontinence can help to reduce stigma

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Smart Tips:



- Assess factors that impact incontinence
- Get to know the person and how they indicate their need to go to the bathroom
- For language/communication barriers, use pointing/gestures or pictures
- Monitor bowel and bladder patterns, diet and fluid intake

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Observe



Recognize signs of **incontinence**, such as:

- frequent urination
- soiled/wet clothes or linens
- strong odour
- urine/feces on bathroom floors
- toilet paper as padding inside the underwear
- increased usage of incontinence products

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Closely watch for signs of **urinary tract infection**:

- strong odour
- minimal urine output
- increased urgency
- discomfort when urinating
- blood in urine
- lower abdominal/back pain/pressure
- increased confusion/agitation
- increased fatigue
- fever



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Assist



- Set up the room for easy and safe access to the bathroom
- Apply strategies from the care plan:
 - Encourage use of commode/urinal
 - Toileting 30 minutes after a meal
 - Regular toileting throughout day
 - Limit caffeine intake
 - Offering decaf coffee or herbal teas

Bowel and Bladder After Stroke



Assist



- Encourage water intake, especially morning and early afternoon
- Educate the person and their family
- Provide emotional support and reassurance

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Seek extra support

- ✓ Persons with incontinence should be assessed by a trained professional
- ✓ When you notice signs of incontinence or a possible urinary tract infection, **report it immediately**

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