



KAISER PERMANENTE®

## URO-GYNECOLOGY PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

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### SKIN CARE FOR THE INCONTINENT PATIENT

A patient who is incontinent cannot control the flow of urine. Incontinence may involve only a little urine leaking out when the person laughs, coughs, or lifts something, or may reflect total lack of bladder control.

Urine is very irritating to the skin. Skin that is continuously exposed to urine quickly becomes inflamed and irritated. If the condition continues, rashes and sores will appear.

It is important, therefore, that you follow a few simple procedures to help prevent this skin breakdown.

1. Keep the perineal area clean. Washing with soap and water is the best way to remove urine from your skin.
2. After washing, you may apply a skin barrier or moisture sealant to help moisturize and protect your skin. Ask your nurse to select the best barrier or sealant for you.
3. If your clothing or bedding gets wet, change them immediately.
4. If your skin becomes irritated or red, notify your nurse or doctor. There are prescription creams and sprays that your nurse or doctor can prescribe to relieve skin irritation.
5. Whenever possible, expose the perineal area to air.
6. If you use plastic sheets or pads on your bed, make sure you don't lie directly on the plastic. Put cotton sheets or pads over the plastic.
7. Wear adult briefs with pads, adult absorptive briefs, or an incontinent pad with super-absorbents to help absorb urine and keep it off your skin.

#### **SKIN CARE PRODUCTS**

The following is a list of skin care products to help cleanse and protect your skin:

**Cleansers** are formulated to gently clean the skin without the irritation of soap. Because some cleansers contain fragrances, people who are allergic to fragrances should check the label or test a small amount of cleanser on a small area of skin to see if there is any skin irritation.

**Wet wipes** come in convenient containers and cleanse the skin without causing irritation.

**Deodorizers** are intended to cover up offensive odors. Deodorizers come in sprays or drops and are to be sprayed in the air or applied to ostomy pouches, leg bags, and bedside drainage systems. They are not applied to your skin.

**Moisturizing creams and lotions** help protect and soothe the skin of incontinent individuals.

**Anti-fungal cream** treats fungal infections of the skin.

**Barrier films, creams, or salves** are intended to protect skin from irritation and damage caused by urine and feces. These products can be used on skin that is already irritated and broken.

**Powders** especially those with cornstarch, can help control moisture. Those who are allergic to fragrances should be aware that some powders contain fragrance.