



Managing bladder and bowel problems in people with dementia: Quick Guide

This leaflet is a quick look at things you can do to help manage bladder and bowel symptoms in patients with dementia. For more detailed information and advice, please see the leaflet 'Tips for managing bladder and bowel problems in people with dementia'.

Maintain a healthy bladder and bowel

- Drink plenty of fluid
- Reduce caffeine and alcohol
- Eat a healthy diet with plenty of fibre (e.g. fruit and vegetables, brown bread and pasta) to encourage regular bowel movements



Make toilets accessible

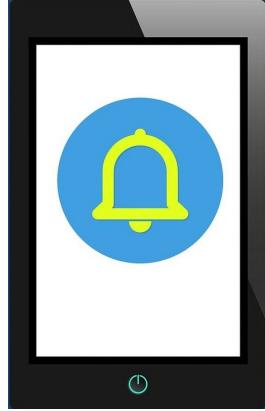
- Ensure toilets are easy to find and identify (e.g. put sign on door or leave the door open)
- Make sure there is good lighting
- Make sure toilets are easy to access – know where the nearest one is, make sure there are no obstacles in the way, easy to open doors, feeling of privacy



Dress appropriately

- Wear clothes that are easy to take on and off (elasticated waists and Velcro are better than buttons and zips)
- Dark coloured clothes can hide wet patches better than light coloured clothes



<p>Regular toilet routine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Some people with dementia may forget to go to the toilet. Regular prompts every 2-4 hours suggesting that they use the toilet can be helpfulKeeping a regular routine is useful – e.g. going to the toilet before or after every mealLook for non-verbal cues and signs that someone needs the toilet – e.g. being more agitated, fidgeting or pacing	
<p>Out and about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Get a RADAR key from your local council or online for access to locked disabled public toiletswww.toiletmap.org.uk can help you find the nearest toilet locationsThe 'Just Can't Wait' card from Bladder and Bowel UK can allow you to jump a queue or access toilets usually only available for staffIf necessary, wear continence products to help contain leaks for extra reassurance	
<p>Professional support</p> <p>There are a variety of healthcare professionals who can help, including GPs, continence advisors, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, district nurses and mental health nurses. If you feel you need additional help, contact your GP in the first instance. They can review and refer you on to other services in your area if they feel it is appropriate.</p>	
<p>Further information on incontinence in dementia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dementia and Continence (Dem Con) website: www.demcon.org.ukAlzheimer's Society website: www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/daily-living/toilet-problems-continenceBladder and Bowel UK: www.bbuk.org.ukContinence Product Advisor website: www.continenceproductadvisor.org	

Dr Katie Evans, Consultant in Elderly Care, RBFT Continence Lead for Elderly Care, December 2025
Next review due: December 2027