

Alzheimer's Foundation of America

 alzfdn.org/incontinence/

Incontinence is difficulty controlling one's bladder and/or bowels. An individual living with Alzheimer's disease may experience incontinence at any stage; however it is observed most in the later stages of the illness.

Signs of incontinence can include soiled underwear and bed sheets, leaking urine and problems going to the toilet. Incontinence may be treatable, so notify the individual's physician if you observe signs.

Incontinence can be caused by:

- A urinary tract infection
- Dehydration
- Untreated diabetes
- Too much caffeine
- Medications

Some ways of managing this are:

- Remind the individual to use the toilet periodically, not waiting for them to ask
- Take the person to the bathroom or show him where it is
- Watch for any pulling on clothes or other behavior that may signal a need to use the toilet
- Outfit the person in loose and comfortable clothing
- Limit fluids in the evening

Remember: Accidents Happen

Try to be understanding when accidents occur. Staying calm and reassuring your person will help both you and them. Incontinence supplies such as adult diapers or bed protectors can be helpful and are available at drugstores and medical supply stores.