

## *Types of Incontinence*

# Reflex Incontinence

### What is it?

This type of incontinence largely affects people with damage to the nervous system such as those with spinal cord injuries, Multiple Sclerosis or stroke.

### Symptoms

The signal from the brain to the urinary system is not getting through, so people may get involuntary leakage which is usually not associated with the desire to void. Automatic bladder emptying may therefore happen periodically without bladder sensation.

The individual tends to develop either an overactive or underactive bladder.

### See also Information Sheets:

- Overactive Bladder
- Overflow Urinary Incontinence

### What treatment is available?

- The treatment for this condition relies on accurate and comprehensive assessment
- Give advice regarding a healthy diet to avoid and alleviate constipation
- Give advice about the importance of establishing a regular bowel routine.
- Gradually reducing caffeine intake and double voiding can ease symptoms (if caffeine is withdrawn too quickly it can lead to caffeine withdrawal headaches).
- Bladder training with a scheduled voiding programme may alleviate symptoms.
- Anti-muscurinic medication may ease symptoms, but may cause side effects like a dry mouth and constipation.
- If you suspect that an individual might have overflow incontinence a bladder scan will help with diagnosis.
- Symptoms may be eased by taking time to sit on the toilet, avoiding distractions when using the toilet and practising double voiding.
- Review medications – is the individual taking medications with an anti-muscurinic effect?
- Tibial nerve stimulation (talk to SPHERE about this option)
- Intermittent Self Catheterisation (talk to SPHERE about this option)

## **See Advice Leaflets: -**

- Contenance and Laxatives
- Impact of Fluids on the Bladder
- Successful Bladder Emptying
- Voiding Programmes
- Antimuscurinic Medication
- Tibial Nerve Stimulation
- Intermittent Self Catheterisation
- Other surgical options – discuss with doctor

## **See also: -**

### **NICE Clinical Guidance - Urinary Incontinence in Women: Management**

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg171>

### **NICE Clinical Guidance – Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms in Men: Management**

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg97>

### **NICE Clinical Guidance – Percutaneous Posterior Tibial Nerve Stimulation for Overactive Bladder Syndrome**

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ipg362>

### **NICE Clinical Guidance – Sacral Nerve Stimulation for Incontinence and Urgency/Frequency**

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ipg64>