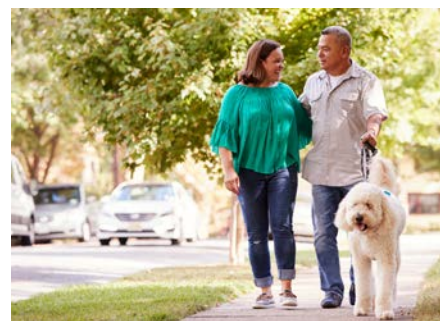


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WELCOME TO NAFC

Thank you for visiting the National Association for Continence!

While nobody is happy about having to deal with bladder or bowel issues, our hope is that this savings guide will make it easier for you to manage your condition, find treatments that work for you, and get on the road to drier days.

This booklet contains offers and information from some of the most well-respected product providers in the industry, but it's just a start when it comes to getting the help you need. Our website contains an enormous number of free, patient-focused resources that we encourage you to make use of, including:

The 'What Could It Be?' Quiz –

A simple, quick questionnaire to help identify your condition.

The NAFC Doctor Finder –

A national directory of qualified, experienced experts.

Conditions Directory –

Education on a full range of bladder and bowel disorders, including videos and free brochures and guides.

The BHealth Blog –

One of our most popular features, with hundreds of articles and insights on almost every topic you can imagine.

Message Boards –

Join a warm, welcoming community you where you can share hints and tips, gain motivation and find comfort from others just like you.

A Guide to Talking with Your Doctor –

Incontinence can be hard to discuss, but this guide makes it a little easier.

The Life Without Leaks Podcast –

Hear stories from patients, doctors, product creators and more.

Newsletter Signup –

Stay in the know with articles covering management techniques, innovative treatments, the latest in incontinence care and more.

And that's only a tiny fraction of what you'll find online! We're constantly adding new information and resources, so it pays to visit regularly. If you don't find what you're looking for, just reach out to us on our contact page or [CLICK HERE](#) and we'll make it our priority to get back with you as quickly as possible.

As you set out on your treatment journey, take comfort knowing that you're not alone. There are millions of others out there going through the same things that you are, and NAFC is here to support all of you. The reason we exist is to make a meaningful difference in your life, and we want you to always remember that There's No Shame In Being Human™.

Yours in good health,
The Team at NAFC

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- Patricia G.



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YOUR GUIDE TO ABSORBENT PRODUCTS

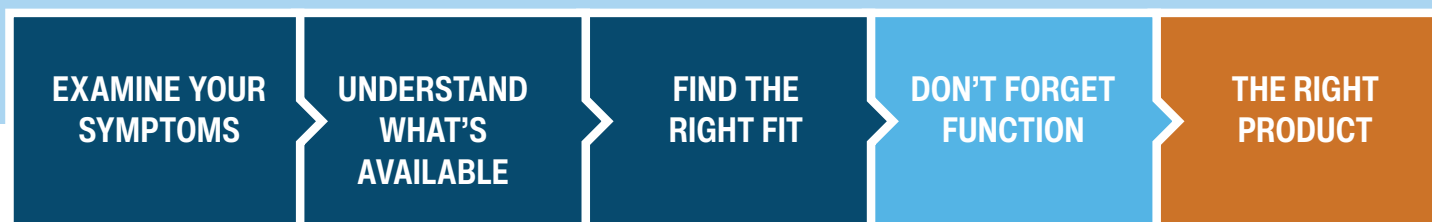
For many people with incontinence, the most effective way to manage their symptoms is through the use of absorbent products.

Even those who are treating their condition with other methods, whether it's behavior modification, pelvic floor exercises, medicine or anything else, often make absorbents their first line of defense.

But as anyone in the market for absorbents knows, it can be difficult to find the right product. Some don't fit well, some are uncomfortable, some fail to absorb enough liquid and, well, the list goes on. If that sounds familiar, this guide is for you – it contains all the basics you'll want to know to find a pad, pull-up or something else that gives you the protection you expect.

YOUR PATH TO THE RIGHT PRODUCT

If you try different absorbents at random, you're likely to get random results. Instead, your best bet is to take a good look at the symptoms you're experiencing, understand the range of items available and narrow your options down by how they fit and how they function.



STEP 1: EXAMINE YOUR SYMPTOMS

The variety of absorbent products on the market today is enormous, so before you even begin trying out different items, it makes sense to figure out what you're looking for in the first place. Here are the questions you should ask yourself – the way you answer these will direct you towards your ideal selection:

- **How heavy is your leaking?** Absorbents are made to cover everything from occasional, light leaking all the way up to heavy, frequent episodes. Which is best for your symptoms?
- **When do you tend to go?** Some people only need protection for the daytime, others only at night, and some need it around the clock.
- **What is your activity level?** Do you tend to be more active or sedentary? Depending on your level of physical activity, some products may make more sense than others.

STEP 2: UNDERSTAND WHAT'S AVAILABLE

If you've spent any time in the absorbent product aisle of your local store or tried shopping for them online, you know how overwhelming it can be to pick a style that matches your particular needs. Here are the most common formats you're likely to encounter:

DISPOSABLES

The vast majority of products you'll come across in your search are disposable. Absorbents made specifically for incontinence are designed to handle the volume and viscosity of urine. The most common options include:

- Liners
- Adult Briefs
- Belted Undergarments
- Protective Underwear/ Pull-Ups
- Bladder Control Pads
- Male Shields
- Male Guards
- Pad And Pants System

REUSABLES

Although most of the items on the market are disposable, there is increasing interest in reusable products. That's because in the long run, they may be more affordable, and many people appreciate how much less wasteful they are.

- Typically made of cotton or a poly/nylon blend
- Generally available as pads, underwear or adult cloth diapers
- Used to manage light-to-moderate urinary and bowel incontinence
- Not widely **distributed**– **usually available online or from medical supply stores**

STEP 3: FIND THE RIGHT FIT

Now that you have an idea of which sort of products you'll want to try out, it's time to go shopping! But just like any other items of clothing you might be purchasing, fit is an essential factor. To find the right fit, there are a few things you'll want to consider:

YOUR OWN BODY – Keep the following factors in mind when choosing an absorbent:

- Your waist and hip size - Getting a product that's too big or too small will allow for leaks to occur
- Your incontinence type – Bladder, bowel or both?
- Your leakage volume – Anywhere from extra light to extra heavy
- Your leakage frequency – Daytime, nighttime or both?

YOUR ACTIVITY LEVEL – If you tend to be active, you'll want a product that gives you greater freedom of movement. At the same time, you may want to use something with elastic guards or other types of protection to ensure that your motion doesn't create leaks. On the other hand, if you happen to have limited mobility, you'll want to take into account your own ability to change and adjust your products as needed.

HOW DISCRETE YOU WANT TO BE – Some products are more noticeable than others, not only by sight but also by sound. If you're going to be out and about, you may favor products that are less conspicuous – but keep in mind that these are often thinner and lighter, so they may not offer maximum protection.

MANUFACTURER'S STANDARDS – Most use the traditional sizing labels from XS to XL, but they often use slightly different measurements to determine what those sizes are. Sizing charts can help, but you may have to use trial and error to find if a particular manufacturer's products are a good fit for you.

STEP 4: DON'T FORGET FUNCTION

Fit isn't the only consideration that can make a difference between a great product and something you'd never want to try again; function is every bit as important. Here are some key factors that will help you make an informed decision:

DAY VS NIGHT USE – Some products are used during the day, but others are made specifically for use at night. Make sure to read the packaging carefully or specify when doing searches online to make sure you choose the right ones.

INCONTINENCE-SPECIFIC FORMATS – Many people with leaks, particularly those who are experiencing them for the first time, try to get by with feminine hygiene products. These may work for especially light leaking, but they're not designed to handle the volume of urine that most sufferers experience. They also don't wick moisture away from the skin the way absorbents for incontinence do, and they don't have built in odor control.

LEAK FREQUENCY – If you leak frequently, you'll want a product that can continue to absorb over a period of time.

LEAK VOLUME – How heavy are your leaks? You'll see labels like Super Plus, Extra, Premium, Maximum, Moderate, Regular, Advanced and Ultimate. While these may help give you some idea of the protection level provided, those terms can vary from company to company. Since there's no official standard, read labels carefully

and be open to trying different products to find the one that best matches your need.

MATERIAL – Most adult absorbent products are plastic-backed to improve fluid retention. However, in recent years, breathable, cloth-backed products have become more widespread. They're not 100% leakproof, but they're still highly effective, and because they tend to be more comfortable, quieter and gentler on the skin, they're a good choice for those with lighter leakage.

BRAND – You're probably already familiar with many of the leading manufacturers of absorbent products, but there's a good chance there are quality brands out there that you've never heard of before. Don't be afraid of trying products from different manufacturers to find one that works for you. And if you need additional help, there are online retailers with professional guides who can help you narrow your list down.

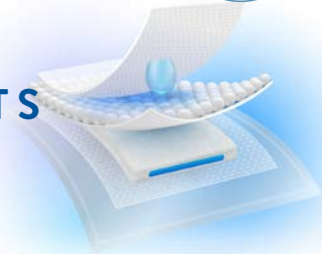
REMEMBER – IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED...

Your body is uniquely your own, so there's no reason to expect that what works for others is going to work for you. The very best advice we can give is to try multiple products. Explore the range of choices out there and you'll be far more likely to find the one that delivers the performance, comfort and peace of mind you deserve.

There's no shame in being
human

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

For more information on products and devices mentioned in this publication, or to find a healthcare expert, contact the National Association for Continence (NAFC) by calling 1-800-BLADDER or visit us online at www.NAFC.org.

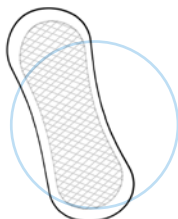


YOUR GUIDE TO DISPOSABLE PRODUCTS

Disposable products are far and away the most common options available, and for good reason: They're designed specifically for urinary incontinence, and the variety of styles to choose from means that there's almost certainly something to help you address your particular symptoms and severity with comfort and convenience.

LINERS

- For very light or light urinary incontinence
- One-size-fits-all
- Designed to be worn with regular underwear



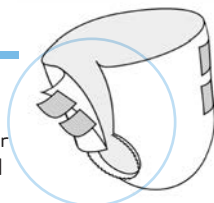
BLADDER CONTROL PADS

- For light to moderate urinary incontinence
- Designed to provide comfort, fit and discretion
- Available in a variety of thicknesses and absorbency levels
- Can be worn with regular underwear or reusable briefs



ADULT BRIEFS

- For heavy urinary or bowel incontinence
- Cloth-like breathable fabric for more complete protection and improved skin health
- Available in multiple absorbencies and types
- Day and overnight models available



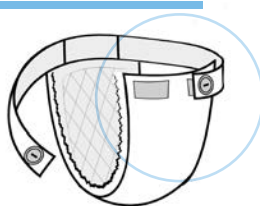
MALE SHIELDS

- For light to moderate urinary incontinence
- For use with stretch mesh briefs or close-fitting underwear
- Adheres to the front of underwear, guarding against leakage



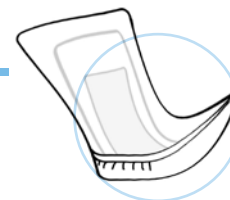
BELTED UNDERGARMENTS

- For light to moderate urinary incontinence
- Held in place by reusable, sometimes washable, straps
- Straps are usually held in place with buttons, snaps or Velcro



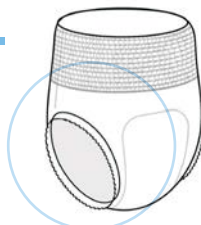
MALE GUARDS

- For light to moderate urinary incontinence
- Elasticized pouches provide a cup-like fit for protection and comfort
- Held in place by an adhesive strip; may have foam backing for extra protection
- Worn with close-fitting underwear



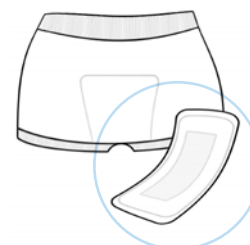
PROTECTIVE UNDERWEAR/ PULL-UPS

- For moderate urinary incontinence
- Convenient one-piece, underwear-like design
- Pulls up and down easily
- Made with cloth-like material and soft elastics
- Often available in men's and women's versions



PAD AND PANTS SYSTEM

- For moderate to heavy urinary incontinence
- Combines a disposable pad with washable, reusable underwear or pants made of cotton or a cotton/polyester blend



YOUR JOURNEY TO DRIER DAYS STARTS HERE.

"SOMETIMES I FEEL ALL ALONE..."

65% of men and women are affected emotionally by their incontinence, making them feel embarrassed, nervous about accidents and deeply ashamed.

Source: 2020 NAFC Annual Survey: Talking To Your Doctor

If you're experiencing unwanted bladder leaks, you're not alone. More than 33 million people in America have the same problem. But knowing how common it is doesn't make it any easier to get the help you deserve.

After all, who likes having a conversation about their bathroom habits? Many of us are uncomfortable just bringing up the subject, and even when we do, we don't always know how to explain our symptoms or what questions to ask the doctor.

That's what this guide is all about: ***Helping you understand that what you have is a medical condition that can be treated, then giving you the confidence to have a positive, productive discussion with your healthcare provider.***

Q. DO I HAVE A REAL CONDITION?

A. The simple answer is that if you have unwanted wetness or feel the regular, urgent need to use the bathroom, you probably have incontinence. That doesn't mean that all cases are created equal – there are a number of distinct conditions, and each of them has its own characteristics and treatment path. When it comes to bladder issues, the chart below can help you identify some of the most common conditions – but keep in mind that you'll need a doctor to get a proper diagnosis:

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CONDITION	YOU MIGHT HAVE THIS IF...	COMMON SYMPTOMS
Stress Urinary Incontinence	...urine leaks from your bladder because pressure has been placed on it	- Urine leakage as a result of physical activity, including bending, laughing, sneezing, coughing, exercise, etc.
Overactive Bladder	...you have the sudden need to urinate	- A rapid, sudden need to urinate - The need to go many times, day and night
Urge Incontinence	...you have the sudden need to urinate AND you sometimes have leakage	- A rapid, sudden need to urinate - Uncontrolled wetness, whether a little or a lot
Mixed Incontinence	...you have symptoms of both Stress Urinary Incontinence and Urge Incontinence	- Any combination of the symptoms above
Urinary Retention	...you have difficult starting a stream of urine or completely emptying your bladder	- Difficulty starting a stream of urine - The frequent need to go - A weak flow once you do get started - Feeling like you need to go again soon after finishing

GETTING THE HELP YOU DESERVE.

"GETTING OVER THE FEAR WAS MY MAIN ISSUE..."

The majority of patients surveyed by the NAFC felt comfortable talking with their primary care physician about bladder leaks, but 30% did not.

*Source: April, 2020 NAFC Annual State Of Incontinence
Survey: Talking To Your Doctor*

Q: IS THIS REALLY WORTH TALKING ABOUT?

A. Absolutely. Incontinence is a real, recognized medical condition that affects women and men of all ages. It's not just 'one of those things that happens as you get older,' and it's certainly not something you should have to learn to live with. And like many medical conditions, it's something that can be treated – in many cases, completely.

Q. HOW CAN I SHARE SOMETHING SO PERSONAL?

A. If you find it hard to open up about your symptoms, remind yourself that doctors deal with these conditions every single day. They've heard it all before and they've seen it all before – probably in the appointment right before yours!

What feels awkward to you is commonplace to them, and they're there to treat the very thing you're seeking help for. Open, honest communication is the best way to get you the care you deserve.

Q. WHO DO I CALL?

A. The simple answer is that if you have unwanted wetness or feel the regular, urgent need to use the bathroom, you probably have incontinence or a related medical issue. But that's a very broad description - there are actually a number of distinct bladder conditions, and each has its own characteristics and treatment path. The chart on the following page can help you identify some of the most common ones, but keep in mind that you'll need a doctor to get a proper diagnosis.

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Q: WHO DO I CALL? (continued)

A. Absolutely. Incontinence is a real, recognized medical condition that affects women and men of all

Some general practitioners will treat your condition themselves, but don't be surprised if you're referred to any of the following specialists:

Gynecologists – Gynecology is about more than just the female reproductive system. An important part of many gynecologists' practice is to identify and treat incontinence and related issues.

Urologists – You may be surprised to learn that urologists aren't only for men – many urologists treat both male and female urinary issues.

Urogynecologists – This is a focused specialty which emphasizes care for the pelvic floor and bladder.

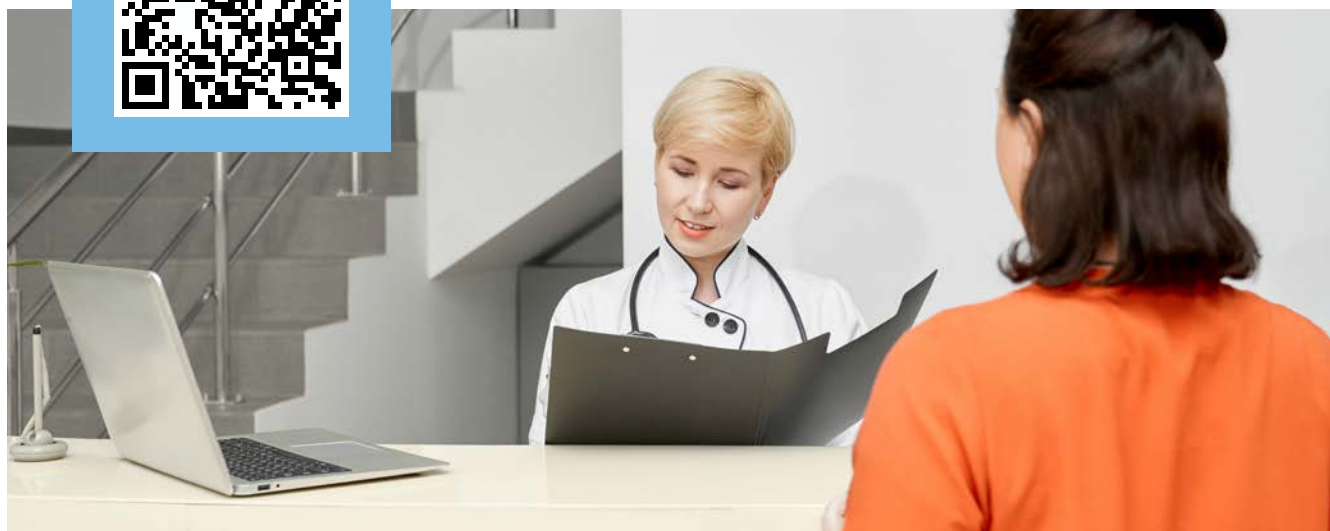
Geriatricians – As physicians who focus on the health of the elderly, geriatricians are well trained in the diagnosis and treatment of continence disorders among seniors.

Neurologists – In some cases, bladder issues may be related to nerve damage or injury, and in those situations, neurologists may be the providers of choice.

Others - There may also be occasions when you are also referred to other specialists, including gastroenterologists and physical therapists.



*Scan this QR code to find a specialist near you, or
click here to access [NAFC's free online doctor finder.](#)*



THE NAFC GUIDE TO HOME HYGIENE



It's important to remember that there is no reason why anyone should have to wake up wet.

KEEPING EVERYTHING CLEAN

The practice of good hygiene when treating a bedwetting condition is absolutely essential for the physical and emotional well-being of everyone involved. Those with the condition are at risk for skin damage as well as lower self-esteem, while those who are responsible for home cleanliness have challenges maintaining a clean, healthy living environment. This guide is intended to help you better manage the two main areas of concern when it comes to hygiene for the treatment of bedwetting: Proper skincare and effective cleaning procedures.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER SKINCARE

The acids and other components of urine can be irritating to the skin – particularly the sensitive skin in the areas most likely to get wet. It's not uncommon for people to develop redness, peeling and sores – and when wet skin rubs against clothing or adult absorbent underwear, scrapes or scratches are often formed at the point of contact. This is made worse by the fact that the germs that ordinarily live on skin can actually interact with urine to create ammonia, which can be especially damaging.

Any type of irritation, sore or cut should be addressed quickly or it can lead to infection. In addition to the bacterial and viral infections that most of us normally associate with open-skin injuries, yeast and fungal infections can be a serious problem for those with incontinence, as well. That's because urine can affect the skin's pH level, and yeast infections like candidiasis and fungal infections like jock itch thrive in that environment.

It may also seem ironic that another skin condition often associated with bedwetting is xerosis, or abnormally dry skin. However, it's a very real consequence of the condition. Xerosis is caused by a decrease in the protective oils that coat the skin, and those oils are sensitive to many environmental factors, including the overexposure to moisture.

It's always better to prevent a problem than to cure one, and that's especially true when skincare is concerned.



THE KEYS TO HEALTHY SKIN

It's always better to prevent a problem than to cure one, and that's especially true when skincare is concerned. The first step towards keeping skin healthy in someone with a bedwetting condition is to put in place safeguards that will help keep the skin dry. This means:

Finding quality absorbent products – Pads and absorbent underwear come in direct contact with the skin and stay there all night, so it's essential that they thoroughly lock moisture away. When choosing an absorbent product, look for something that has good wicking ability, meaning that it quickly and fully moves moisture to the product's core.

Getting a good fit – Poor fit is one of the leading causes of wet skin and wet beds. Don't naturally assume that bigger is better – the fit should be appropriate for each person's shape and size. Too snug and it can pinch, causing irritation and creating an environment for sores and infection. Too loose and liquid can leak out before it's fully absorbed, negating the value of the pad or absorbent underwear in the first place.

Addressing accidents quickly – The sooner wet absorbent underwear and bedding are changed, the better. This is another reason why finding a good fitting, properly absorbent product is important: many people are reluctant to change protective undergarments frequently because of the expense involved, and they'll wind up using a soiled item for longer than they should. In the long run, it's far more cost effective – and significantly healthier – to buy and use products that do the job right when they're supposed to, and change them out for fresh ones as the need arises.

Proper washing technique – Avoid ordinary bar soaps and antibacterial soaps for skincare in sensitive areas. They have a tendency to dry the skin and raise its pH, both of which can worsen existing skin conditions.

RESTORING SKIN HEALTH

Once a skin condition has started to appear, it's important to address it as quickly as possible. Untreated or worsening skin conditions can produce significant discomfort, lead towards broader infections that pose a grave health risk and seriously degrade quality of life.

Fortunately, there are a number of products available today which have been proven to offer fast and effective relief for a broad number of the skin conditions associated with bedwetting. It's important to note, however, that an existing infection shouldn't be treated without medical guidance – consult a physician if an infection is swollen, warm to the touch or discharging any fluid.

No-rinse body wash – Today's gentle, no-rinse cleaners are formulated to be effective even in sensitive areas. They moisturize while they clean and do an outstanding job at eliminating odors.

Moisturizing creams – For use when dry skin is the primary concern. While these can be excellent components of a skin care routine, make sure to choose a product that isn't unintentionally irritating.

Moisture barrier creams/ointments – Designed to provide a protective coating for the skin, keeping moisture out. They typically contain ingredients that soothe irritation and moisturizers to restore skin health.

Antifungal treatments – Used to treat and prevent fungal infections, these come in a range of forms – creams, ointments, sprays, and more. Although there are many over-the-counter choices available, prescription-only medicines are often required to treat serious or stubborn infections.

Personal cleansing washcloths – These disposable wipes replace soap and water, providing a hygienic cleansing solution that nourishes the skin rather than drying it out. Look for brands that contain moisturizing cream, aloe or other components for added comfort and rehydration.

InterDry sheets – These are intended to be used in skin folds and other places where skin contacts skin. Those contact points create an environment that's ripe for trapping moisture and growing bacteria, and these sheets offer an effective way to manage wetness, odor and inflammation.



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for more information
on the importance
of skin care.*



EFFECTIVE HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

While many of us think of cleanliness as good in-and-of itself, there are some very particular reasons why it's especially important to be diligent when cleaning the living space for someone with a bedwetting condition:

Elimination of irritants – Rapid and thorough treatment of bedding, clothing and other items that come in contact with the skin reduces the opportunity for acids and other irritants to do damage.

Odor removal – Odor is one of the most unpleasant aspects of bedwetting, but there are a number of products and methods that can reduce odor significantly – or eliminate it entirely.

Self-esteem enhancement – Mess and odor are very noticeable signs of a condition that already makes many people feel selfconscious. By eliminating these, you're going a long way towards helping sufferers feel better about themselves and improving their quality of life.

BEFORE YOU CLEAN

It's important to remember that there is no reason why anyone should have to wake up to wet clothing or bedding – the selection of absorbent products, medical treatments and behavioral therapies is so good today that there is almost certainly a solution available for everybody.

If you find yourself waking up wet, visit [NAFC.org/adult-bedwetting](https://nafc.org/adult-bedwetting) for information to help you get a drier night's sleep.

HOW TO CLEAN

Cleaning is a reality that you may have to deal with. And while cleaning may be a chore, bedwetting shouldn't make it an unmanageable one. The simple steps below outline how you can get more satisfying results with less effort, and that's something everyone can be happy about.

CLEANING SHEETS AND OTHER BEDDING

1. Remove soiled items from the bed as quickly as possible – the longer it remains on the bed, the longer it has an opportunity to contaminate the mattress, which can be a challenge to clean in its own right and also a source of lasting odor.
2. Flush soiled areas immediately with water or club soda.
3. Soak the stain in a solution of 1 quart warm water, ½ teaspoon liquid detergent and 1 tablespoon ammonia for 30 minutes.
4. Rinse well with water.
5. Wash as you normally would.

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CLEANING MATTRESSES

1. Strip and clean bedding as described on the previous page.
2. Blot up extra moisture from mattress fabric with a dry cloth or paper towels.
3. Sprinkle baking soda on the affected area to absorb remaining moisture.
4. Spray the affected area either with a solution of 1 part vinegar to 1 part water or a solution made from a commercial biological cleaning product (such as Persil Bio or Biokleen laundry detergent). Let sit for 5 minutes.
5. Repeat steps 2 and 3. Let sit for 3 or more hours to allow the baking soda to absorb remaining moisture and odor.
6. Vacuum the remaining baking powder.

CLEANING FURNITURE

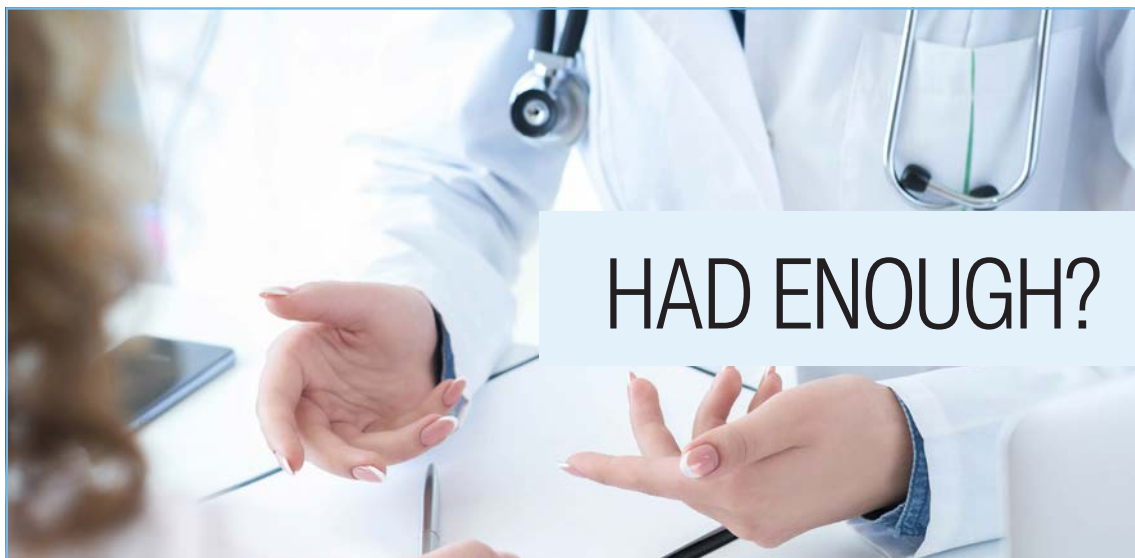
There are a number of products on the market that have been developed specifically to eliminate urine stains and odors. Many of these work by using enzymes to treat the affected area at the chemical level. Always make sure to follow manufacturer's instructions and test products on an inconspicuous area to ensure that it does not damage fabric or remove colors.

FURNITURE PROTECTORS

There are a number of barrier products available to cover furniture and prevent accidents from getting into upholstery or mattresses at all. For a detailed list of choices, please refer to the NAFC Absorbent Product Guide.

HOW TO CLEAN

Cleaning is a reality that you may have to deal with. And while cleaning may be a chore, bedwetting shouldn't make it an unmanageable one. The simple steps below outline how you can get more satisfying results with less effort, and that's something everyone can be happy about.



HAD ENOUGH?

[CLICK HERE](#) for our free doctor finder and get started on your way to drier days.

Have your symptoms finally gotten so bad that you're ready to see a doctor about them?

NAFC makes it easy to find a qualified, caring physician right by you.



GET ON THE GO!

NAFC's free On The Go newsletter delivers you important hints and tips for incontinence care and treatment, expert insights, patients stories, opportunities to participate in research and more.

Plus, when you sign up today, you'll receive a FREE set of care and management tools customized just for you.

[CLICK HERE](#) to subscribe – it takes just one minute to stay in the know.



YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS ALONE.

Incontinence can be isolating, but it doesn't have to be. NAFC has created a warm, welcoming community where patients come together for support, to share advice, and to lift each other up.

There are dozens and dozens of topics with active discussions going on right now, and if you don't see what you're looking for, you can ask your own questions. Best of all, participation is totally anonymous, so there's never any fear of embarrassment.

Signing up is easy – [JUST CLICK HERE](#) – and in no time at all, you'll be part of a community that's dedicated to delivering meaningful, sometimes life-changing advice.

REAL PROBLEMS DESERVE REAL ANSWERS.

That's why we created the Bhealth blog

NAFC's Bhealth blog is the most active part of our website, and with good reason: It features hundreds and hundreds of short, easy-to-read articles about the real issues incontinence patients face, with practical advice that you can put to use straight away.

Visit the Bhealth blog today – [CLICK HERE](#) for insight and info that can make a real difference.