



SUGGESTIONS FOR PATIENTS HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH SKIN CARE FROM URINE LEAKAGE

The constant presence of urine on skin can create significant irritation. Urine in the presence of the bacteria that reside normally on our skin creates the formation of ammonia (that's right, the stuff with which we clean the sink and floors). The ammonia is so irritating to the skin that redness, swelling and discomfort results. Sometimes the irritation is increased by an overgrowth of yeast that thrives on these conditions. Obviously keeping the urine away from the area as much as possible is helpful, but not always possible given the circumstances. The following are tips to help care for your skin. If the problem worsens, you should let us know.

1. Change protection (diapers or pads) often.
2. Dry area frequently. The irritation is increased by constant moisture. Try washing area with clear water, and then pat dry gently. THEN dry the area thoroughly with a hand held hair dryer using a warm (not HOT) setting. Repeating this maneuver as often as possible during the day is helpful.
3. Protect the area after drying so that the urine does not touch the skin. Coating the skin after a bowel movement with any one of a number of products is helpful. These include Vaseline®, A & D Ointment®, Diaparene®, zinc oxide.
4. In cases where the redness and irritation is particularly bad, a prescription for a cream with a small amount of cortisone and antibiotics and anti-fungal can be helpful. It is to be used very, very sparingly over the areas of redness and is to be applied after thorough drying (See Step #2). The drugs cannot be used indefinitely and if no improvement occurs within a few days let us know. In any event, you should not use the drugs constantly for more than a week. Intermittent use, when needed, is OK.
5. In some situations, the irritation is so severe that we have to consider using a mechanical device to keep the urine away from the skin. The possibilities of infection make these less than ideal in all situations but must be used if the situation is warranted.