Different Types of Urinary Incontinence
Having urinary incontinence means you pass urine unintentionally. When and how this happens depends on the type of incontinence you have. Most people have either stress or urge incontinence. Stress incontinence is when you leak urine as your bladder is put under sudden pressure, for example when your laugh, sneeze or cough. It is not related to being stressed.
Urge incontinence is when you feel a sudden and very intense need to pass urine and you’re unable to delay going to the toilet. There is often only a few seconds between the need to urinate and the release of urine.
There is also mixed incontinence when you have symptoms of both stress and urge incontinence, overflow incontinence when you pass small trickles of urine very often and total incontinence which is severe and continuous incontinence.

Living with incontinence
People with incontinence can worry so much about needing the toilet, even on quick trips to the local shops, that they become virtually housebound, however you can get a key from the disability network RADAR that allows you to use disabled toilets around the country under the National Key Scheme.
It is important to look after your skin if you have incontinence so wash using a cotton cloth or disposable wipes. Use products that cleanse without drying. Don’t
use soap and baby wipes as they make the skin dry. After cleansing, always moisturise and use a barrier cream. Incontinence shouldn’t stop you going on holiday. The key is to plan ahead. Take enough of the products you use to last you, your clean up kit (containing a change of clothes, pads, hand wash, wet wipes and plastic bags), a portable washing line and pegs and a deodorising spray.

10 ways to stop leaks
For many people with incontinence the following self help tips and lifestyle changes are enough to relieve symptoms:
1. Quit smoking.
2. Do the right exercises - high impact exercise puts pressure on your pelvic floor muscles and can cause leakage. Sit ups can also make you leak. To strengthen your pelvic floor muscles replace jogging and aerobics with Pilates.
3. Avoid lifting as it puts strain on your pelvic floor muscles. If you must lift say children, tighten these muscles before and during the lift.
4. Lose weight as this can weaken your pelvic floor muscles.
5. Treat constipation promptly as straining to empty your bowel weakens your pelvic floor muscles. Eating more fibre and taking more exercise can help. Cut down on caffeine as it irritates the bladder and can make incontinence worse.
6. Cut down on alcohol as it is a diuretic and makes you urinate more often.
7. Drink six to eight glasses of water a day (but no more).
8. Eat the right foods – avoid spicy and acidic foods such as curries and citrus fruits as they can irritate the bladder and make the symptoms worse.
9. Do pelvic floor exercises.

We stock a range of incontinence products and can offer confidential advice if you need further help.