Continence Products

Types of absorbent products

Washable absorbent products have been developed to a high standard over the years. Continence underwear is available in sizes from age 3 to Adult. Various styles are available to choose from which vary in their level of absorbency from slight, light, moderate or heavy urinary incontinence. (Although it should be born in mind that washable continence products may not be suitable for everyone with heavy urinal loss due to the possible insufficient capacity of fabric to absorb large amounts of urine.) The following are available:

- **Pads** that are slim and unobtrusive, and can be slipped inside your usual pants. (From £4). Pads have a surface layer worn next to the skin, usually made from a ‘feel-dry’ material, which allows urine to pass through to a soaker layer of absorbent material. Most have a waterproof backing or under layer to minimise leaks. Some women find that washable pads designed for menstruation are also suitable.

- **Pants with built in absorbent pads**. Pant styles are more like ordinary underwear. Styles include high cut, bikini, thong, floral and lace versions (from around £6)

- **Pouch pants** for use with a pad, inserted into a pouch sewn into the gusset. Once wet, only the pad is changed (from around £6 per pant)

- Other styles take the form of **wrap-around-all-in-one nappies** (about £35) or **terry squares with waterproof over pants** (from £10)

- Washable pads and products are also available for your car, the sofa, to protect your mattress etc.

Benefits of using washable products

- Washable pads and pants can save you money. For the amount you would spend on disposable pads in 8 weeks, you could buy all the washable pads you need to last a year or more. There are no additional washing costs when pads or pants are included in your normal household wash. Don’t use fabric conditioners as these can reduce absorbency

- **Prevents waste**. There’s a booming market in disposable continence products that’s adding to Britain’s waste mountain. In 2001 alone, nearly £24 million was spent on continence products alone and that doesn’t include all the sanitary towels and panty liners that some people use instead. 90% of this ends up in landfill.
It is extremely important to seek medical advice!

For anybody - children, young people, adults or older people experiencing any form of continence issue, it is extremely important to seek medical advice. For example, nearly 17% of women (an estimated 3.8 million) over 18 experience stress incontinence when they laugh, cough or sneeze. Stress incontinence occurs in men too. Stress incontinence is frequently preventable, can be significantly improved, can often be cured and can at least be managed without loss of dignity.

Your GP and NHS Continence Advisor can help. You may even be able to get free absorbent products from your local authority.

Contact your GP or the following local Continence Advisory Services:

- **Hailsham Health Centre**  
  Vicarage Field  
  Hailsham  
  East Sussex  
  BN27 1BE  
  Tel 01323 446 990

- **Bexhill Hospital**  
  Bexhill  
  East Sussex  
  TN40 2DZ  
  Tel 01424 755 255 ext 5332

- **Brighton General Hospital**  
  A Block  
  Elm Grove  
  Brighton  
  BN2 3EW  
  Tel 01273 693 600 ext 3398
Suppliers of washable continence products

Mail Order

- **Synergy Healthcare Ltd**, Lion Mill, Fitton Street, Royton, Oldham OL2 5JX
  Free phone 0800 917 0625

- **Robinson Healthcare Ltd.** Lawn Road Industrial Estate, Carlton-in-Lindrick, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 9LB
  Tel. 01909 735 000

- **Vernacare care shop**, Slater Street, Bolton BL1 2HP
  Tel. 01204 38 48 58
  Web [www.allaboutinco.com](http://www.allaboutinco.com)
  Email [careshop@careshop.co.uk](mailto:careshop@careshop.co.uk)

- **Topak**, Beacon House, Units 1-2, Brookside Avenue, Rustington, West Sussex, BN16 3LF
  Tel 01903 783 000
  Web [www.topak.co.uk](http://www.topak.co.uk)
  Email [sales@topak.co.uk](mailto:sales@topak.co.uk)

- **Tyco Healthcare**, Continence Care, 154 Fareham Road, Gosport, Hants, PO13 OAS
  Tel 01329 224 335
  Web [www.tyco.co.uk](http://www.tyco.co.uk)
  Email [medcustserv@emea.tycohealthcare.com](mailto:medcustserv@emea.tycohealthcare.com)

- **In Confidence**, Perfectly happy People Ltd, 93 Bollo Lane, Chiswick, London W4 LU
  Tel. 0870 1202 515
  Web [www.in-confidence.co.uk](http://www.in-confidence.co.uk)
  Email [info@phpbaby.com](mailto:info@phpbaby.com)

- **Incosan**, Eden House, PO Box 44339, London SW19 3TZ
  Tel 0870 442 5676
  Web [www.incosan.co.uk](http://www.incosan.co.uk)
  Email [info@incosan.co.uk](mailto:info@incosan.co.uk)

- **Vifora**, Populierenlaan 2, NL-3901 XB, VEENENDAAL, Netherlands.
  Tel +31 318 820 928
  Web [www.vifora.com](http://www.vifora.com)
  Email [info@vifora.com](mailto:info@vifora.com)
Sources of Information and Support

- **The Women’s Environmental Network**
  Web [www.wen.org.uk](http://www.wen.org.uk)

- **The Continence Foundation**
  Web [www.continence-foundation.org.uk](http://www.continence-foundation.org.uk)

- **Incontact** (Support network)
  Tel 0870 770 3246
  Web [www.incontact.org](http://www.incontact.org)
  Email info@incontact.org

- **Promocon** (For independent advice about continence products)
  Tel 0161 834 2001
  Web [www.promocon.co.uk](http://www.promocon.co.uk)
  Email promocon@disabledliving.co.uk