MANAGEMENT OF BLADDER AND BOWEL DURING AND AFTER CANCER TREATMENTS

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the types of bladder and bowel problems that can occur with cancer and its treatment;
- Consider the management options available;
- Consider management of bladder and bowel problems in palliative care;
- Offer some continence management resources for healthcare professionals to use in supporting patients.
BLADDER & BOWEL FACTS

- It is estimated around **14 million** people in the UK suffer from a bladder problem, and **6.5 million** with some form of bowel problem (Bladder and Bowel Community 2018).

- There may be up to **3 million** people in the UK with urinary incontinence. **60-80%** have never sought medical advice for the condition (British Association of Urological Surgeons 2018).
**WHAT IS THE IMPACT?**

- Cost
- Social isolation
- Recovery
- Dignity
- Relationships
- Mental & physical health
**Bladder & Bowel Problems in Cancer: Classification by Aetiology**

**Problems caused by disease**

- **Bladder:**
  - Bladder outlet obstruction caused by carcinoma in situ;
  - Inflammation of the bladder in primary bladder tumour;
  - Bladder dysfunction caused by neurological damage;
- **Bowel:**
  - Bowel symptoms caused by bowel cancer;
  - Bowel dysfunction caused by neurological damage.

**Problems caused by treatment**

- **Bladder:**
  - Chemotherapy-induced haemorrhagic cystitis;
  - Radiotherapy-induced bladder irritation;
  - Intrinsic sphincter deficiency caused by surgery.
- **Bowel:**
  - Immunotherapy-induced colitis;
  - Chemotherapy-induced diarrhoea and/or constipation;
  - Radiotherapy induced bowel problems;
  - Diarrhoea/constipation after bowel surgery.
**Bladder & Bowel Problems in Cancer: Classification by Effect**

**Voiding Dysfunction:**
- ‘Can’t get it out’
  - Retention
  - Constipation

**Incontinence:**
- ‘Can’t keep it in’
  - Leakage
  - Urgency
  - Frequency
Management is dependent on:

- Aetiology of the dysfunction;
- Impact on the patient;
- Circumstances of the patient;
- What is practical to offer.
Patient experiencing urinary leakage post-prostatectomy

- Reassurance
- Pelvic floor exercises
- Referral to continence physiotherapist
- Dietary advice
- Containment devices
- Medication e.g. anti-cholinergics
- Surgical treatment
Patient experiencing faecal incontinence post-pelvic radiotherapy

- Reassurance
- Assessment of access to toileting facilities
- Pelvic floor exercises
- Referral to continence physiotherapist
- Dietary advice
- Containment devices
- Medication e.g. loperamide
- Surgical treatment for anal fissure or stricture, artificial anal sphincter
- Specialist assessment and treatment e.g. biofeedback, electrical stimulation
Patient experiencing urinary retention at end of life

- Reassurance
- Appropriate investigations
- Urinary catheter?
- Medication review

Be aware of potential differences in goals of care in EoL setting
Clinical nurse specialists

Urology team

MDT

Local continence service

Continence Product Advisor: https://www.continenceproductadvisor.org/
Types of Female Devices

Internal Urethral Devices
Internal Vaginal Devices
External Urethral Devices

Female Devices

A female device is designed to prevent urinary leakage, usually for women with stress urinary incontinence (SUI).

Click on the pictures below for more information about female devices.

Contents
1. Categories of female device
2. How to get help

Categories of female device

There are three main categories of Female devices:

- **External urethral devices** - products that are applied over the urethra at the opening
- **Internal urethral devices** - products that are placed inside the urethra
- **Internal vaginal devices** - products that are inserted into the vagina

How to get help

Click on **Product Advisor** for help choosing between the different devices.

Click on the pictures below for detailed information about the products.

More likely to suit you if...
- You mainly have stress urinary incontinence
- You have good hand control
- You have good memory and mental function
- Using a device (as opposed to a pad) is acceptable to you
- Preventing leakage is more important to you than containing it

Less likely to suit you if...
- Your leakage is mainly associated with urgency
- Urinary tract infection is a major concern for you

Top Tips

Be the first to add your tip for this product

Evidence

THANKS TO

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FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

- **NICE Guidelines:**
  - Urinary incontinence in women: management (2013)

- **For patients:**
  - Bladder and Bowel Community [https://www.bladderandbowel.org/](https://www.bladderandbowel.org/)
  - Macmillan Cancer Support [https://www.macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk)
  - Prostate Cancer UK [https://www.prostatecanceruk.org/](https://www.prostatecanceruk.org/)

- **Toileting in palliative care:**