

About Incontinence

Causes of Incontinence

There are many factors that can contribute to incontinence.

Some common causes:

- **Short Term:** Urinary tract and bladder infections, constipation and medication side-effects are some of the most readily treated causes of short-term incontinence. Following a visit to a doctor, relief is usually quick.
- **Long Term:** Childbirth, auto accidents or surgical procedures can sometimes cause long-term incontinence. Recovery from these causes may affect the rate at which continence is restored.
- **Prostate Surgery:** Prostate problems and the treatments required to correct them are the most frequent causes of urinary incontinence in men. The two most common problems are Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) and prostate cancer, often treated with surgery. Because early diagnosis is key to successful treatment, doctors recommend yearly prostate exams for men over the age of 50. Men with a family history of prostate cancer should begin these checkups at age 40.

Most men have temporary incontinence following surgery for prostate cancer. The degree to which incontinence occurs, and the severity of it, varies with each man. While incontinence can be distressing, there are many treatments and management options available.

The good news is that it generally lessens within six months to one year. In many cases, continence is fully restored.

- **Chronic:** Birth defects, progressive illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease and other chronic conditions may require ongoing management of the related symptom of incontinence.

The good news is that, in many cases, incontinence can be cured and it can always be managed.

