



Fecal Incontinence



Overview

With this problem, you have trouble controlling your bowels. You may have leaks. You may soil your clothing before you can get to a toilet. This keeps you from being as active as you like.

Causes

Why does this happen? Well, many things cause it. For some, it's a result of diarrhea or constipation. For others, a problem like hemorrhoids or rectal prolapse is to blame. It can be caused by muscle weakness or injury in your pelvic area. It can happen after surgery or radiation therapy. For women, childbirth may bring it on. And, it can be caused by nerve diseases. There are other causes, so your doctor will need to find out which cause is affecting you.

Symptoms

Symptoms depend on the type of incontinence you have. Some people may feel a strong urge to pass stool, but can't make it to the toilet in time. Others may pass stool or mucus without ever feeling an urge.

Treatment

Treatment depends on the cause. Diet changes, medications and absorbent pads may help you. Pelvic floor exercises and bowel training may help, too. You may benefit from other options, including surgery. Your healthcare provider will create a care plan that's right for you.