**Incontinence**

**Category 2:**

Urinary incontinence is loss of bladder control. Symptoms can range from mild leaking to uncontrollable wetting. It can happen to anyone, but it becomes more common with age.  
  
Most bladder control problems happen when muscles are too weak or too active. If the muscles that keep your bladder closed are weak, you may have accidents when you sneeze, laugh or lift a heavy object. This is stress incontinence. If bladder muscles become too active, you may feel a strong urge to go to the bathroom when you have little urine in your bladder. This is urge incontinence or overactive bladder. There are other causes of incontinence, such as prostate problems and nerve damage.  
  
Treatment depends on the type of problem you have and what best fits your lifestyle. It may include simple exercises, medicines, special devices or procedures prescribed by your doctor, or surgery.  
- [National Institutes of Health (NIH)](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/urinaryincontinence.html)  
  
Bowel incontinence is the inability to control your bowels. When you feel the urge to have a bowel movement, you may not be able to hold it until you get to a toilet. More than 5.5 million Americans have bowel incontinence. It affects people of all ages--children and adults. It is more common in women and older adults, but it is not a normal part of aging.  
  
Causes include:

* Constipation
* Damage to muscles or nerves of the anus and rectum
* Diarrhea
* Pelvic support problems

Treatments include changes in diet, medicines, bowel training, or surgery.  
- [National Institutes of Health (NIH)](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/bowelincontinence.html)

