

MATURE

living

4 ways to deal with urinary incontinence

Urinary incontinence can affect anyone, but it’s most common among seniors. Though leaks can be embarrassing and cause some people to avoid social situations, staying active, both physically and socially, is key to a healthy lifestyle. Here are four things you can do to stop stressing about incontinence.

1. **Get protection.** There are a variety of pads and protective garments you can purchase to minimize the impact of accidents. Choosing a model that fits well and is adapted to the severity of your leaks will allow you to go about your day without worries.

2. **Exercise.** Kegel exercises are used to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles, which help control urination. Ask a health care professional to teach you these exercises and integrate them in your routine.

3. **Ask about medication.** Anticholinergic medications can help control the muscle spasms that cause leaks. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

4. **Train your bladder.** Bladder training is a behavioural incontinence treatment that works by reinforcing certain habits. For instance, waiting increasingly longer periods before using the bathroom after feeling the urge to urinate can help you get in the habit of relieving yourself at a normal frequency.

The first thing to do when dealing with incontinence is to talk to your doctor so you can discover the root of the problem. Once the cause of your incontinence is determined, the best treatment option for your particular case can be identified.



The benefits of robot pet therapy

You’ve probably heard of pet therapy, a type of animal assisted intervention used to improve a patient’s social, emotional and cognitive functioning. It’s been shown to be particularly helpful for seniors. But what you may not realize is that using robotic cats and dogs may be just as effective. Here’s what you should know about battery-powered pets.

CATS, DOGS AND DINOSAURS
Thanks to advances in artificial intelligence, today’s robot pets employ motion sensors to simulate surprisingly realistic behaviours. They, purr, wag their tails, blink, vocalize and respond when petted.

One upside of adopting robot pets over real ones is that you’re not limited to com-

mon domestic animals. Aside from cats and dogs, you can purchase seals and even dinosaurs. Additionally, robotic animals won’t trigger allergic reactions. They also never get sick, don’t need to be fed and won’t leave you unpleasant surprises on the carpet.

REDUCING LONELINESS
Owning a cat, dog or other pet can help seniors combat social isolation. Similarly, interacting with robot pets provides social benefits. They’re great conversation starters and encourage exchanges among residents in retirement homes, possibly because they remind people of pets they might have owned in the past.

A SOOTHING PRESENCE
Robot pets can help stressed or anxious seniors to relax. They’ve also been shown to alleviate distress in patients with dementia. In some cases, they can help reverse language loss and may reduce the need for medication. Finally, they promote healthier lifestyles by giving seniors a reason to move and can sometimes help families connect.

Robot pets usually cost between \$150 and \$200, which make them a relatively affordable way to put a smile on a loved one’s face.





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Pet Friendly

2 outdoor games for seniors to try this summer

If you’re a regular camper, or simply enjoy spending time outdoors, chances are you’ve played enough bocce and washer toss to last a lifetime. Here are two other types of games you can play with your friends, children and grandchildren.

1. LADDER TOSS
Also known as ladder golf, this game is played by throwing bolas, which are two balls connected by a string, onto the rungs of a ladder. Each rung has a different point value, and the game ends once a team accumulates a predetermined number of points (typically 21).

The great thing about ladder toss is that you can add one or more optional rules to keep things interesting. Plus, the lightweight components are easy to store and transport, making this an ideal game for camping, the park and your backyard.

2. FINNISH BOWLING
Known by the trademark *Mölkky* in its native Finland, this game is played using 12 numbered wooden pins and a slightly larger throwing pin.

The goal is to toss the throwing pin and knock down as many of the numbered pins as possible. Certain combinations of downed numbered pins are worth more points than others.



Easy to learn and carry, this is the perfect game to take to the park or on your next camping trip.

Both ladder toss and Finnish bowling rely on chance more than skill, which means anyone can win.

5 ways to remember to take your medication

Do you find yourself forgetting to take your medication from time to time? These five tips will help you stay on top of your treatments.

1. **Use a pill organizer.** This accessory allows you to keep track of what pills you’ve taken and when. Plus, using a pill organizer makes it easier to track medication you only take a few times a week as opposed to daily. Ask your pharmacist for help choosing a model that works for you.

2. **Mark a calendar.** Prepare an agenda or calendar to track the medications you take every day. If you’re the type who goes out a lot, you can get a small one that’ll fit in your pocket.

3. **Set an alarm.** Use an alarm on your watch or cellphone to keep track of when you need to take each medication. Cellphones allow you to set multiple recurring alarms so you don’t need to remember to program them every day.

4. **Use memory prompts.** Store your medications in places where you’ll see them. This will make it easier to remember to take them. For example, you could put morning

pills next to the coffee maker and leave your evening pills next to your toothbrush.

5. Download an app. Medisafe and Med Minder are among the many apps specifically designed to help you remember which pills to take and when.

Remembering to take your medications can be difficult but using one or more of the above strategies is bound to help.

A TOUGH PILL TO SWALLOW?
Some tablets can be cut or crushed if you’re having trouble swallowing them. Talk to your pharmacist to know which of your medications can be taken this way.

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