

# Incontinence

Incontinence comes in many different forms, both urinary incontinence and faecal incontinence. Of the two main types, urinary incontinence is more common than the inability to control **bowel movements**.

**S**ome types of urinary incontinence may indicate an **underlying condition** such as **cystitis**, which is chronic **inflammation** of the **bladder** causing people with it to urinate, sometimes **painfully**, between 40 and 60 times a day. Faecal incontinence may occur when stool becomes wa-

tery, as is the case in diarrhoea. Other causes of stool incontinence are: **constipation**, which may lead to a weak anal **sphincter muscle**, inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel, haemorrhoids, nerve damage, and neurological diseases such as multiple sclerosis. Incontinence can also lead to **skin irritation** on the **buttocks**, hips, genitals, or between the **pelvis** and **rectum**.

Do you feel that you need to use the toilet more often than usual?

Not that much, no.

Well that's good.

Why?

If you needed to go very often, it could indicate that you have cystitis. Do you experience any pain when **passing water**?

No, I just lose a few drops **for no apparent reason**. And it's causing skin irritation.

You could have something called **stress incontinence**.

But I'm not stressed at the moment!

It's related to **pressure** on the bladder. It can happen in **pregnancy**, when people are overweight, or when lifting heavy objects. Some people even experience it when they **sneeze!**

That's it, my pollen allergy is causing me to sneeze quite suddenly.

I see. We have these discreet **incontinence pads** for sensitive skin and for your kind of incontinence. This cream acts as a barrier to the skin irritation caused by losing a few drops. **By the way**, do you need antihistamines?

No thank you, but I will take those other products that you recommended.

Good. Will that be all?

Yes, thank you for your help and advice.

No problem. You are more than welcome. Goodbye.

Thanks again and goodbye. ■

*Catherine Croghan,  
Lecturer in English and native speaker*

PTA: Guten Tag.

Female customer: Do you speak English?

Yes, I do. What can I do for you?

Could we go somewhere more private, please?

We have the back office just behind me for such **purposes**. Please, take a seat. How may I help you?

Oh, this is so **embarrassing!** I am afraid that I have urinary incontinence!

There's no need to be embarrassed! A lot of people have it! It's nothing to be ashamed of.

But it is a bit taboo, isn't it?

Of course it's not something that people talk about in public! In Germany, we have an **aging society**, and the older one gets the more likely it is that incontinence occurs. I need to ask you a few questions so that we can see how best to help you.

Okay, go ahead.

## VOCABULARY

incontinence	Inkontinenz
bowel movements	Stuhlgänge
underlying condition	Vorerkrankung, Grunderkrankung
cystitis	Zystitis, Blasenentzündung
inflammation	Entzündung
bladder	Blase
painful	schmerzhaft
constipation	Obstipation, Verstopfung
sphincter muscle	Schließmuskel
skin irritation	Hautreizung
buttocks	Gesäß
pelvis	Becken
rectum	Enddarm, Mastdarm
purposes	Zwecke
embarrassing	peinlich
aging society	alternde Gesellschaft
passing water	Wasser lassen
for no apparent reason	ohne ersichtlichen Grund
pressure	Druck
pregnancy	Schwangerschaft
sneeze	niesen
incontinence pads	Einlagen für Inkontinenz
by the way	übrigens