

How to help people with weeing problems

People with disabilities can have weeing problems due to diet, medication or illness.

What causes weeing problems?

- Not drinking enough water or drinking too much water.
- Lots of fizzy drinks, alcohol, tea or coffee – these can irritate the bladder.
- Side effects of some medications.
- Illness, such as a urinary tract infection.
- Faulty equipment like a leaking catheter or pads that need changing.

What do weeing problems look like?

People with weeing problems may:

- have bad-smelling wee
- have a pain in their stomach or back, or a stinging sensation when they wee
- need to wee more often than normal
- find it hard to wee or not be able to wee, and be in pain or discomfort
- need to urgently wee
- wet the bed.

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If someone has wee that smells bad or pain when weeing, they may have a urinary tract infection. This is serious as it can hurt the kidneys.

- Encourage the person to drink water – this will help flush out the kidneys.
- Contact the support worker right away or if they are not available, take the person to the doctor as soon as you can.
- Find out about [urinary tract infections](#).

If someone is weeing more than normal:

- check they are not drinking a lot of water
- check they are not drinking a lot of fizzy drinks, coffee, tea or alcohol as these can irritate the bladder
- see if they are taking medicine that makes them wee a lot, like a fluid tablet or diuretic – if they are, ask the support worker if they should be taking this medicine
- if they have diabetes, they may need their blood sugar levels checked – contact the support worker or if they are not available, take the person to the doctor.

If a person smells of wee and:

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- **wears a continence pad or leg bag**, see if the pad needs changing or the bag needs emptying - if it does, contact the support worker for advice
- **wears a catheter, see if the smell is round the catheter** – if it is, the catheter could be leaking so contact the support worker for advice.

If you feel confident, ask the support worker to ask a health professional to show you how to fit, change and empty equipment so you can do it in the future.

If the person cannot wee:

- they may be stressed or worried – contact the support worker for advice; tell the person help is coming, stay with them and speak calmly about nice things
- run the tap while they are sitting on the toilet - sometimes the sound of running water can help the person wee
- give the person privacy if it's safe – sometimes people can't wee in front of others
- ask the support worker if they have helped the person wee recently.

If the person cannot wee and is in pain, ring 000 and ask for an ambulance.

If the person needs to wee urgently:

- help them to the toilet immediately, and give them the help they need
- take time when helping them, as rushing them can make them anxious or upset
- help them clean themselves and change if they have wet themselves
- encourage them not to drink fizzy drinks, alcohol, coffee or tea
- tell the support worker.

If the person wets the bed, take them to the doctor to find out why.

If the person complains of intense pain when weeing or because they cannot wee, ring 000 and ask for an ambulance.

Help, support and more information

- The person's support worker can provide information and advice.
- The person's doctor can monitor their health.
- Emergency services can advise you what to do over the phone.
- The [National Public Toilet Map](#) has information on locations, accessibility and facilities of public toilets round Australia. [Download the app](#)
- [Better Health](#) - caring for people with weeing problems and where to go for help.
- [Continence NDIS](#) - what the NDIS will fund and how to access funding.
- [Healthy bladder and bowel habits](#) - an easy English booklet.

If you do not have internet access or a printer, ask the support worker to print this information for you.