

# FACT SHEET

---



## Physical Changes After Brain Injury Bowel & Bladder Control

### QUICK FACTS

- Often bowel and bladder problems are experienced in the early days to weeks after injury
- Most regain control of these body functions with time and practice

### WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?

- Loss of bladder or bowel control
- Increased urgency to urinate
- Incomplete bladder or bowel emptying

### WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE CAUSES AND COMPLICATIONS?

#### Possible causes:

- Difficulty recognizing the need to go to the bathroom
- Inability to plan ahead to give enough time to get to the bathroom
- Difficulty walking to the bathroom
- May not want to ask for help
- May not be eating enough foods with fiber or drinking enough liquids

#### Possible complications:

- May be complicated by medications
- Increased risk for bladder infections
- Skin problems due to incontinence

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

#### Support healthy bowel and bladder functions by encouraging the individual to:

- Eat at regular times
- Eat foods high in fiber
- Drink fluids
- Use diapers or pads
- Assist the individual in following a recommended schedule or intervention outlined by rehabilitation staff

*Disclaimer: This information is not meant to replace advice from a medical doctor. Consult a health care provider regarding specific medical concerns or treatment.*