

### Incontinence-associated dermatitis (IAD)

#### WHAT IS IT?

*Incontinence-associated dermatitis* (IAD) is the term that describes inflamed skin caused when urine or stool stays on the skin, leading to skin irritation and breakdown and sometimes a bacterial and yeast infection.

Babies and elderly people with dementia are at highest risk for IAD. In most of these cases, it is up to someone else to help them with their DIY.

#### WHAT CAN I DO MYSELF (DIY)?

Reducing or eliminating incontinence is the best way to reduce the risk of IAD, but if this is not possible the skin in the affected area needs to be protected in two ways: absorbent incontinence products need to be worn that can wick urine away from the skin and a barrier cream, such as a zinc cream, can be applied on clean, dry skin as often as needed.

#### WHEN DO I CALL IN A PRO?

Your primary care provider can connect you with health-care professionals who specialize in the management of incontinence. They can also recommend treatment for any infections.

#### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Another set of free resources, called the [Care at Home series](#), may also be of interest to you, especially [Caring for Easily Damaged Skin: Preventing and Managing Moisture-associated Skin Damage](#).

### THE KEY RULE

**Eliminate incontinence if possible.** Incontinence is the inability to control urination or defecation. In some individuals, incontinence can be reduced or eliminated by establishing a toileting routine and making sure there is easy access to the bathroom.