

**Patient
Information**

Having a bladder and bowel assessment

Information for adults

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about attending an outpatient clinic for assessment of your bladder and bowel dysfunction.

Losing control of your bladder and/or bowel can be a very distressing and embarrassing problem that you may find difficult to talk about. It can happen to almost anyone, young to old, men, women and children.

A detailed assessment is the first step to regaining control of your bladder and/or bowel.

There are many different types of bladder and bowel problems and for most people these are curable once the cause has been found. A continence assessment carried out by a specialist nurse, who has expert knowledge in this field, is the first step to making things better. The specialist nurse is trained to understand the problems you are having and will help to identify the cause to allow you to receive the appropriate treatment or management.

What will happen during the assessment?

During your assessment the specialist nurse will ask you about your problem in order to build up a picture of what may be causing it and what can be done to help.

You will also be asked for some additional information about your problem. This can be very personal and will involve keeping a record of your bladder and bowel habits. Charts are provided to help you store this information and will be sent with your appointment letter.

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Department

**Gloucestershire
Continence
Service**

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You will be asked about:

- How much urine you pass
- The number of times you have any leakages
- What type of fluids you drink
- How much fluids you drink in a day
- How often your bowels are opened
- What type of stool/poo you pass
- What foods you eat, to be recorded in a food diary

This information is very important, please try not to be embarrassed by these questions, the more detail you can provide the more accurate the assessment will be.

In some situations, it may be necessary for you to be examined and/or have specialist tests carried out. The specialist nurse will always advise you if this is the case. They will also give you all the information you need and answer any questions that you may have before you consent to any of these procedures.

Some people like to have a chaperone accompany them for this type of personal care. Please feel free to ask for this before any procedure is carried out. If you prefer, a person close to you may accompany you.

You may be asked to provide a urine specimen for testing.

A bladder scan may be required to see if you are emptying your bladder. An ultrasound bladder scan measures the amount of urine stored in the bladder. It can be carried out immediately before passing urine and/or after passing urine, to check how well your bladder has emptied.

You may be required to pass urine in the clinic toilets before this scan is performed to get an accurate result.

This appointment will take about 30 minutes.

What happens next?

Following the assessment, the specialist nurse will talk to you about what they have identified and will discuss with you some treatment and/or symptom management options.

Patient Information

There are many treatment options for bladder and bowel problems which may include exercises such as pelvic floor or bladder retraining programmes, fluid advice, medication or even surgery.

Management options might include the use of special aids, products or equipment. This may include appliances or products that are fitted to your body to contain urine or devices that can aid in helping your bladder or bowels to empty. The specialist nurse will help you to understand these options and for you to receive treatment or management, tailored to your specific needs.

Follow up appointments

Following your initial assessment, you may need follow-up appointments with the specialist nurse to make sure that your treatment is working. This will be discussed and arranged with you. Follow up appointments will take 15 minutes.

Contact information

The specialist nurses who make up Gloucestershire Bladder and Bowel Health are committed to providing excellent care. We would therefore be grateful for any suggestions you might have that could help us improve the quality of the service. If you have any comments, then please forward them to the address below.

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Further information

Bladder and Bowel UK

Website: www.bbuk.org.uk

Disabled Living

Website: www.disabledliving.co.uk

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