Disposable Pads - Do's and Don'ts

1. Do make sure the person has been assessed first for the correct type, size and absorbency of pad and girth measured if using all in one, taped pads.

2. Do use one pad only at all times. Double padding (two pads) will not fit correctly, it can damage the skin and it doesn't work.

3. Do prepare the pad before application. Ensure the pad is folded lengthways and inwards. Ensure the waterproof cuffs are raised inside the pad.

4. Do apply the pad from front to back when fitting, ensuring that the widest end of the pad is at the back. This helps to prevent contamination

5. Do ensure when using shaped pads, that close fitting underwear or appropriate sized nets pants are used to secure the pads.

6. Do ensure when using the all-in-one pads (pads with tapes), that the top tapes are secured downwards and the lower tapes are secured upwards.

7. Do use water based creams or emollients sparingly.

8. DON'T use oil-based creams or emollients. Oil-based barrier creams in particular transfer from the client's bottom onto the surface of the pad and if these get on the pad, the pad becomes waterproof and urine is not adsorbed, increasing risk of skin breakdown.

9. DON'T use talcum powder. Powder can absorb urine or perspiration and can increase the risk of fungal infection, particularly in the skin folds and groin area. It can also reduce the absorbency of the pad.

10. Do check the ''wetness indicator strip'' regularly. It is not necessary to change the pad until the colour change is two thirds full, unless there is faecal incontinence or a urinary tract infection.

11. Do store pads in a dry storeroom, in original packaging. If they are stored in a moist environment the pads may absorb moisture, making them less absorbent. Please note there is a use by date on each pack.

12. Don't take pads from one person to use on another person. This can lead to increased risk of cross infection as well as not being the correct pad for the individual person. Each person is assessed based on their individual need.

For more information on continence care, visit: www.hse.ie/continencecare