



How Breathable Incontinence Care Products Bring Peace of Mind to Frontline Workers

There are two halves to the term “incontinence care,” and no one does a better job at enabling seniors with incontinence to focus on the second half of the term, rather than the first, than skilled nursing providers.

The care that skilled nursing facilities (SNF) provide to seniors in this delicate area is deeply important, and they choose their tools wisely. Many adult incontinence products leave something to be desired for seniors. Restrictive products, such as those made from polyester, risk damaging the skin and creating an undignified, unpleasant experience.

Breathable products — from adult briefs and underwear to underpads — protect the skin by keeping the wearer cool and dry and reducing pressure injuries while also empowering these residents to feel confident and natural.

The breathable incontinence care product suite from Cardinal Health provides daily benefits to skilled care residents and the caregivers by their side. Here is a look at the top three benefits, revealing how the right product can improve quality of life for all involved.

Health benefits: enhanced skin care

For resident health, safety and comfort, incontinence care products must protect the skin. It’s a focus that skilled care residents are driving.

“What we have really seen over the past few years, especially in the acute space, is the resident gravitating toward overall skin health,” says Joe Gilles, global marketing director of Cardinal Health. That trend has led to another, Gilles says, which is the push for the “bottoms out” method, where the resident spends more time on a premium underpad, without wearing a brief. This removes the heat buildup, which improves skin.

“Unfortunately what happens in the post-acute space, or people at home, is that they don’t have that option,” he says. “People are much more used to adult briefs to keep everything contained. So if they’re going to be in the brief, what’s the next best thing? And that’s where the breathable backsheet came in.”

This breathability is Cardinal Health’s key innovation in this space, particularly for skin health, reducing the pressure injuries that come from incontinence-associated dermatitis, or IAD.

“When you have something that’s not breathable, you drive the temperature up, and there will be an imbalance to the microbiome,” says Barbara Abounader, Cardinal Health’s director of clinical operations. “When there is a disruption to that micro-skin biome, it can lead to various issues.”

Operational benefits: lower cost, greater efficiency, happier staff

With improved skin health for residents comes operational benefits for the SNFs themselves. “The typical resident struggling with incontinence will be changed every two to three hours, depending on their needs,” Abounader says.

While that schedule doesn’t change based on the breathability of the product, it epitomizes just how great an impact incontinence care has on a SNF’s time and budget. Breathable products create the potential for decreased cost around skin products.

“Residents won’t have as many skin issues that are usually driven by heat and moisture, so you probably will use less products that usually help you solve those,” Gilles notes. “If the resident’s skin is in better health, then you don’t have to remedy it as much with the barrier creams and other ointments like that.”

And when skin health improves, residents are happier. That leads to a happier staff, which is especially important during these trying times.

“SNF workers are providing the best care, and whether we’re a CNA or an RN or anyone else, giving that best care gives them satisfaction,” Gilles says.

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Joe Gilles
Global Marketing Director of Cardinal Health

Resident benefits: more dignity and a better quality of life

2020 has put all of us through the ringer — and in many ways, skilled nursing providers have gotten the worst of it. The people in a SNF’s care are at an increased risk to COVID-19, creating additional logistical challenges, deeper emotional wounds and increased scrutiny for caregivers in a job already rife with all three.

That higher COVID risk also means that social distancing efforts have led to true isolation, such as seniors not seeing their children and grandchildren since the start of the year. There is an emotional factor at play that caregivers work diligent every single day to relieve. In a difficult year for everyone in SNFs, the fact that breathable incontinence care products can increase resident dignity and quality of life makes them even more valuable today.

“We want to collaborate with SNFs when it comes to delivering skin wellness, and that’s because we know how hard clinicians work,” Abounader says. “Specifically for me, I have a team of clinicians who go out and help facilities implement these products. We know the importance of doing it right.”

To Abounader and Gilles, loss of dignity for residents with improper incontinence care, and the addition of stress for caregivers, is the ultimate cost. Breathable products, therefore, help provide the ultimate gain.

“You have enough to deal with on a day-to-day basis,” Abounader says. “Let’s make this one step easier for you.”

To learn more about Cardinal Health’s suite of breathable incontinence care products, visit [CardinalHealth.com](https://www.CardinalHealth.com).



Jack Silverstein
jsilverstein@agingmedia.com