

## CARE OF THE ANAL REGION

1. Keep the area clean by washing after every bowel movement. A nightly bath is particularly important if you itch at night. A bidet is ideal, but sitting in a bath or over a bowl of water is a good substitute. A shower jet is also a useful way of cleaning. Make sure that all the small particles of motion are removed from the skin crevices around the anus.
2. Avoid rubbing with a bar of soap or a rough flannel. Soap remaining in the skin crevices can be very irritating. Use aqueous cream or emulsifying ointment as a soap substitute.
3. If you are away from home or good toilet facilities when you have to pass a motion use wet toilet paper. This provides better, gentler cleaning than hard paper.
4. Keep the area dry – dab the skin gently with a towel or very soft paper. Do not rub. A hair dryer is the gentlest way of drying thoroughly but do not use this in the bathroom.
5. Avoid excessive moisture – never leave a wet dressing on the anal skin. Wear cotton underwear, never nylon. Avoid any firm foundation garment that presses the buttocks together. The free circulation of air will prevent moisture accumulating. For woman a loose skirt is better than tight jeans; in the home a long skirt with no pants are even better. Avoid tights, use stocking or crotchless tights.
6. Zinc and castor oil cream may be used as a barrier cream, especially in hot weather.
7. Avoid perfumed talcum powder – this tends to collect into small, solid lumps in the crevices and, also the perfume may cause allergy; even baby powder is not ideal.
8. Keep the bowels regular and smooth with plenty of fibre (roughage, bran) in the diet. Some dietary items cause irritation or loose motions in some people; avoid anything that does this to you. Do not sit and strain for more than a few seconds when passing a motion; take more roughage if necessary. Coarse bran has flakes, which are passed unaltered and may make it difficult to cleanse around the anus. A smooth bulk forming aperient such as Nornacol, Isogel or Regular may suit you better.
9. Scratching at night when half asleep may damage the skin. If you find this a problem wear light (cotton) gloves.