

New Innovation in Continence Management

ABL (Absorption Before Leakage)

New validated standard to test the realistic in-use absorption capabilities of Continence Products before they leak.

Continence Products find an essential role in enhancing the quality of life of those that live with incontinence who are:

- Unable to be cured
- Are awaiting treatment
- Treatment is unavailable
- Are awaiting treatment to take effect
- Who elect not to pursue cure options (Rottenden, 2010)

Good quality product selection can radically affect the quality of life of people who live with incontinence. Those who are difficult to treat often have the most severe incontinence, therefore are the most dependent on quality products that will help to achieve social continence (Rottenden, 2010).

Those who live with moderate to severe urinary incontinence are traditionally reliant on disposable continence aids.

Fader (2008) reported 5 characteristics for achieving social continence are:

- To hold urine without leaking
- To keep the skin dry
- To be comfortable
- To be easy to put on
- To contain smell

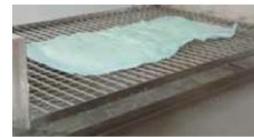
The table below demonstrates the top 5 characteristics that are required from a pad to provide effective continence management. These have been listed (in order of importance) for men and women with moderate to severe incontinence living in the community. You can clearly see that the most important element here is leakage.

Top 5 pad characteristics (Day)	Priority of Importance Day (Sample size 77)	Top 5 pad characteristics (Night)	Priority of Importance Night (Sample size 77)
To hold urine without leakage	93%	To hold urine without leakage	96%
To contain smell	57%	To stay in place	69%
To stay in place	51%	To be comfortable when wet	54%
To be discrete	46%	Fit of the pad	43%

Fader (2008)

Modern continence management is in the process of being refined by a new continence product testing method known as ABL “Absorption Before Leakage”. ABL originated from EDANA, the European Disposables and Nonwovens Association. ABL is used to determine in-use absorption values of continence products for use on immobile people with moderate to severe incontinence.

What this means is that we will no longer have to solely rely on the conventionally used ISO test method that involves soaking the entire continence product in fluid, which results in measuring only theoretically possible absorption capacities.



In contrast the, ABL test method simulates realistic test conditions, taking into consideration:

- Human body shape
- Pressure caused by body weight
- Positioning in bed
- Realistic voiding volumes released at the voiding point



These considerations determine realistic absorption capacities and will provide not only health professionals but consumers also, with a realistic assessment on continence product absorption capacities. This will facilitate easier selection of appropriate continence products to provide optimal social continence for those that are dependent on continence pads.

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References:

- ABL (Absorption Before Leakage), source: standard test method WSP 354.1 (1)
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 Fader, M., Cottenden, A., Getliffe, A., Gage, H., Clarke-O'Neill, S., Jamieson, N., Williams, P., Brooks, R., Malone_Lee, J. (Eds.) (2008). Absorbent products for urinary/faecal incontinence: a comparative evaluation of key product designs. Health Technology Assessment 12(29), 1-208
 ISO 11948-1:1996 Urine absorbing aids – part 1: Whole-product testing