

Learning About How to Use a Bedpan

Learning About How to Use a Bedpan

If the person you're caring for is not able to leave their bed to go to the bathroom, they may need to use a bedpan. A bedpan is a container used to collect urine or feces, and it is shaped to fit under a person lying or sitting in bed. Bedpans can be made of plastic or metal, and some can be used with liners to prevent splashing and to make cleaning easier.

If you are helping someone with a bedpan, try to be relaxed. Helping with a bedpan can be embarrassing for both of you. This may be especially true if you are caring for someone of the opposite sex. If you are calm and don't seem embarrassed, the person may feel more comfortable.

How can you help someone use a bedpan?

Helping someone use a bedpan



1. Sprinkle a small amount of body powder on the rim of the bedpan to help with sliding. You can use a bed pad under the bedpan for spills.
2. Help get the bedpan into position.
 - a. Have the person sit up or lift up the hips slightly and then slide the bedpan under the person. Or if you have a helper, help the person lift his or her hips as your helper slides the bedpan under the person's buttocks.
 - b. Or you can help the person turn to the side. Gently press the bedpan against his or her bottom and then help them turn back onto the bedpan.
3. If you can leave the person alone safely, leave the room to give privacy.

After the person uses the bedpan



1. Make sure to hold the bedpan in place and help the person roll off of it, away from you. Carefully set the bedpan to the side.
2. Help the person wipe if needed.
3. Empty the bedpan into the toilet.
4. Rinse and wash the bedpan using a disinfectant diluted with water. It may help to use a small sprayer that attaches to the toilet water supply. Dry the bedpan or let it air-dry.
5. Take off your gloves and throw them away.

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information call Health Link at 811.

Current as of: April 1, 2019

Author: [Healthwise Staff](https://www.healthwise.net/patientEd) <https://www.healthwise.net/patientEd>

Medical Review: Adam Husney, MD — Family Medicine & Gayle E. Stauffer, RN — Registered Nurse & Kathleen Romito, MD — Family Medicine