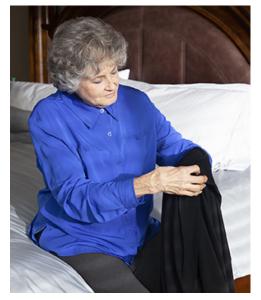
## VANDERBILT W HEALTH

## Stroke: Self-Care

Routine tasks may be hard after you've had a stroke. But many people can learn ways to manage their daily activities. In fact, daily activities may help you to regain muscle strength and bring back function to affected limbs.

## **Bathing and dressing**



By learning a few new ways of doing things, most people who have had a stroke can bathe and dress themselves. You may want to try the following:

- Test water temperature with a hand or foot that was not affected by the stroke.
- Use grab bars, a shower seat, a hand-held shower, and a long-handled brush.
- Dress while sitting, starting with the affected side or limb.
- Put on shirts that pull over the head, and pants or skirts with elastic waistbands.
- Use zippers with loops attached to them.
- Visit the hair salon weekly, or change to a "wash and wear" hairstyle to avoid using blow dryers and curling irons.
- Use an electric shaver instead of a razor to prevent injuries.
- Review grooming with your occupational therapist.

## Managing bladder and bowel problems

After your stroke, you may not be able to control your bladder and bowels. Nurses will work closely with you to set up a new routine.

- You may be taken to the toilet on a schedule. This might be every 2 to 3 hours. Making a bathroom stop before going out may also work well.
- A time may be set to empty the bowel. This will help train your bladder and bowels to go at specific intervals.
- You may wear absorbent briefs or use a condom catheter. This is a small bag that fits over the penis.
- You can use adult diapers if needed.
- Drink fluids in the daytime and limit them in the evening so you won't need to use the bathroom at night.

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