UNDERSTANDING MEDICAL TESTS

There are many ways in which the urinary system can malfunction... infections, blockage, neurologic changes, cancer, and muscle weakness are just a few. Therefore, the complaint of incontinence or other urological symptoms may lead the doctor on an exploration which would include ordering several medical tests. The tests selected depend on what he or she suspects the cause of the incontinence might be.

Understanding how these tests are conducted and the ways in which their results help the physician diagnose the problem will both lessen unnecessary fear and facilitate better doctor/patient communication.

URINALYSIS Most of us have been asked to give a sample of our urine for urinalysis. This specimen is put into a test tube and inserted into a centrifuge. Using the force of gravity, particles in the urine such as stones, blood cells, and bacteria will separate out. Then the urine is looked at under a microscope to ascertain if unwanted matter is present.

URINE CULTURE If the urine is infected, the bacteria which is the cause of the infection must be identified, and an effective drug to combat the infection must be found. This is a two stage process. The urine is spread on agar (a medium which allows the bacteria to grow) and incubated. After some hours, if infection is present, changes will occur in the color of the agar and/or there will be observable colonies of bacterial growth. A trained eye can now identify the exact bacteria present.

Then, in step two of this process, bacteria are spread on more agar, again to encourage growth. But this time the purpose is to identify a drug such as Septa, Ampicillan, Grantricin, and others which kill the bacteria. Only by scientific control of bacterial growth and medication testing, can correct treatment proceed.

CYSTOSCOPY This is a very helpful test to the urologist because it allows a visual examination of the inside of the bladder. A sterilized instrument called a cystoscope is passed gently through the urethra and into the bladder. The physician can then detect any abnormalities or pathologic conditions, many of which can still be present with a normal IVP. If necessary he can also take a biopsy of a suspected tumor.

Depending on the patient, this procedure is often done under local anesthesia with very little discomfort. For others, this may be inadequate and a general anesthetic is preferred. A great deal of helpful data can be learned from a cystoscope examination.

URETEROSCOPY This test is similar to the cystoscope in that it allows the physician to look directly inside the body. In this case, he can look at the entire length of the ureters. Ureters are the tubes leading from the bladder to the kidneys. Parts of the inside of the kidney can also be examined. This test is done under general anesthetic in the operating room. A thin wire guide is pushed through the

(Continued on back page.)

SIMON ANNOUNCES UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO SAMPLE PRODUCTS

Which disposable incontinence care product would be right for me? This is one of the often asked questions we receive at the Simon Foundation. So many factors enter into this decision - the severity of your incontinence, your level of physical activity, daytime or nighttime use - to name just a few. We know there is no one preferred product for everyone.

Since incontinence is a symptom, everyone with the problem should consult their doctor. Your doctor or nurse may recommend products for you to try. However, many people tell us that they cannot locate products easily or that products are packaged in too large a quantity, making it difficult to try a number of different items. This is why Home Delivery Incontinent Supplies Co. (a mail order incontinent care supplier) is offering Informer readers a trial pack. The trial pack is a low cost and convenient means to sample different products.

SAMPLE PACK NO. 1 is for light to moderate forms of incontinence. It contains eight products made by four different manufacturers. SAMPLE PACK NO. 2 is for moderate to heavy forms of incontinence. Pack No. 2 contains 8 products made by five different manufacturers. Each pack is $9.99. You may order both packs if you prefer. Also included will be an identification chart, manufacturer's brochures, and an HDIS (Home Delivery Incontinent Supplies Co.) catalog. To obtain a sample pack, fill out the following order blank, enclose check made payable to HOME DELIVERY INCONTINENT SUPPLIES CO. (HDIS) and mail to:

SIMON FOUNDATION SAMPLE PACK
POST OFFICE BOX 875
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091

Please allow two weeks for delivery. Your samples will be delivered in an unmarked box by UPS. If you have any questions, call Home Delivery Incontinence Supplies Co. at 1-800-538-1036.

Remember, incontinence can be cured and managed. The solution begins in your doctor's office.

Name __________________________
Address _________________________
City, State ________________________
Zip Code _________________________
Please indicate your:
□ Hip size (in inches) ___________
□ Waist size (in inches) ___________
Please send:
□ SAMPLE PACK No. 1
□ SAMPLE PACK No. 2
(for light to moderate incontinence) ......□
(for moderate to heavy incontinence) ......□
SIMON SAYS:

**Out of the Closet** One of the primary missions of the Simon Foundation is to end the stigma associated with incontinence and educate the public about cures and management techniques. Recently, two highly visible articles appeared in Time Magazine and Good Housekeeping about incontinence and our work. If you missed these articles, why not order them from our Reprint Series? Then, when you finish reading them, include them in a letter to your local newspaper requesting that they publish an article also.

**Reprint Series** If you've been an Informer reader for just a short time you may have missed an article which would be valuable to you. The Simon Foundation Reprint Series may be just what you need. Titles currently available:

Reprint No. 1:
“ADVANCED AGE NOT A CAUSE FOR INCONTINENCE”

Reprint No. 2:
“FINDING AN INCONTINENCE PRODUCT TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS”

Reprint No. 3:
“URINARY INCONTINENCE – ROLE OF THE ENLARGED PROSTATE IN THE OLDER MAN”

Reprint No. 4:
“CLEAN INTERMITTENT CATHETERIZATION FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INCONTINENCE”

Reprint No. 5:
“OPERATIONS FOR THE TREATMENT OF GENUINE STRESS INCONTINENCE IN FEMALE PATIENTS” and “KEGEL EXERCISES” (This is one reprint).

Reprint No. 6:
“CONTINENCE CLINICS SPRINGING UP AROUND THE COUNTRY”

Reprint No. 7:
“ARE YOU READY TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT INCONTINENCE?”

Reprint No. 8:
“THE LAST OF THE CLOSET ISSUES” – Time Magazine and “THOSE EMBARRASSING ALLEMENTS: HERE’S HELP!” – Good Housekeeping (These two articles are considered one reprint).

To order reprint articles, send $1.00 per article with a business-size self-addressed stamped envelope to:

**REPRINTS**
The Simon Foundation
Box 835-R
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

**Film** “A touching, enlightening video...” says Time Magazine about our new film, *The Solution Starts With You*. Already hundreds of members have seen this twenty-five minute docudrama about real people dealing with incontinence and its affects on their families, friends, co-workers, doctors, and nurses. This film was designed to educate the American public about the long hidden topic of incontinence.

Available in 16 mm. film, ¾” tape and ½” VHS, it can be shown to patients and medical personnel in hospitals, church and service club groups, and long-term care facilities, or viewed in the privacy of one’s home on VHS. Whichever viewing method you choose, to help spread the word, don’t miss *The Solution Starts With You*.

For information regarding the film/video
*The Solution Starts With You*, contact:
The Simon Foundation
Audio/Visual Resource Library
5000 Park Street, North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33709-9989
1 (800) 237-4599
In Florida 1 (813) 541-7571 Ext. 218

☐ **Purchase**

Payment or purchase order must accompany this form. Add $4.00 to prices below when purchase order is used.

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☐ **Preview**

Two day use $15.00 prepaid. Can be applied to purchase price.

Check format desired:
☐ 16mm film
☐ ½” VHS tape
☐ First choice date ______________ (allow 4 weeks before show date)
☐ Second choice date ______________ (allow 5 weeks before show date)
☐ Send when available or if above dates are not available.

Ship “*The Solution Starts With You*” (18981) to:

Name: ____________________________
Organization: ____________________
Address: __________________________
City: _____________________________
State: ____________________________ Zip: _____________

**NEW BOOK** Clinics in Geriatric Medicine, Urinary Incontinence, edited by Simon Foundation Advisory Board Member Dr. Joseph G. Ouslander, Assistant Professor of Medicine, John Hopkins University School of Medicine. Although written for the Geriatric Physician, all physicians and nurses treating incontinence should be aware of this reference. Publisher: W.B. Saunders Co., West Washington Square, Philadelphia, PA. 19105.

**HAVE SOME FUN** Those of you who have read our book *Managing Incontinence: A Guide to Living With the Loss of Bladder Control* know we believe that having a quiet laugh at ourselves and our predicaments sometimes helps us develop ability to turn an unhappy problem into one of life’s little molchills. The following sentences, taken from a collection of statements which supposedly appeared in church bulletins across the nation, may provide you with a smile:

“The service will close with ‘Little Drops of Water’: one of the ladies will start quietly and the rest of the congregation will join in.”

“On Sunday, a special collection will be taken for the defraying of our expenses for the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the carpet, please come forward and get a piece of paper.”

**Changing Address** If you move and want to keep your Informer coming regularly, let us know your new address. Please be sure when corresponding with us to always include the eight digit code found above your name on the mailing label.

***************
**REQUEST FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Yes, I would like to receive all of the Simon Foundation’s mailings, including their quarterly newsletter, **The Informer**. Enclosed is $8.00 for my membership. I understand that all mailings will come to me in an unidentified envelope.

*Contributions and membership in the Simon Foundation are tax deductible.

Name: ____________________________
Address: __________________________
City & State: ______________________
Zip Code: _________________________

*NOTE: Your annual membership will begin with the next edition of the Informer.*

***************
ONE VOICE, an editorial

Although we've never met, she's one of my best friends. We've spent many good times together . . . through her books, of course. Her name is Joni, and she is a quadriplegic.

Reading about the hardships, courage, and coping of others often offers inspiration and how-too's for turning life's lemons into lemonade. For instance, here is how Joni handled an incontinence problem on an early date with her new husband Ken:

"But dating someone in a wheelchair . . . no," Ken says. "I've never done that before."

"Well, there's something else you're going to have to do that you've never done before," I (Joni) say with a sly grin.

"What's that?" He reaches for his wallet to pay the bill.

"My leg bag needs emptying."

"Okay," he says. "Just tell me what to do." Ken negotiates my wheelchair through the tables toward the door. We pause in front of the alcove that leads to the ladies' room on the left and men's room on the right. "Uh . . . we have a problem here."

"Yes, Well, I hadn't thought about this one," I tease.

"Come on, Joni. No jokes," Ken whispers as several people walk around us, going in and out of restrooms. "What do I do?"

I try to be serious but I can't resist saying, "Is this the part where you're not afraid even though I'm different?" I look at Ken with a Cheshire-cat grin. "Okay. Okay. Let's head outside and find a tree."

"A tree?"

"Well, it's more classy than a fire hydrant, don't you think?"

Books offer us this marvelous chance to be a voyeur, to look in on other people's private lives. When coping with a distressing problem, social comparison, that is, seeing how others cope, can only help. As we all know, dealing with incontinence has many aspects, including a changed image of oneself. Looking at oneself differently is a battle no one knows when they will have to fight. One split second on an icy road, or one unexpected doctor's diagnosis, and life changes forever.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Recently, a radio station in Philadelphia featured a urologist discussing incontinence disorders. A man called the radio station and said that the Simon Foundation had free information on this problem and would send it to people. May I please receive this material?

THANK YOU FOR EXISTING PENNSYLVANIA

Dear Philadelphia:

Very often we get requests such as yours because our members are on the alert to help others. Congratulations to the man somewhere in Philadelphia who cared enough to take the time to let others know about the Simon Foundation. We hope all of you will do the same.

Kathy Miller was thirteen when she was struck by an automobile on a busy highway. She had to learn to speak and walk again. She also had to regain a spot in the teenage social system. She accomplished all of that and more. Kathy won the 1978 "International Award for Valour in Sport."

Jory Graham, a wonderful author, wrote while dying of cancer: "Any alteration of one's physical intactness is a hideous experience." She knew exactly what those of us experiencing a damaged house felt. Her column, "A Time for Living" brought hope to thousands.

"Inherent in the diagnosis of cancer," she wrote, "is outrage that a disease, a disease, will now wreak every aspect of our lives. That fury should be treasured for it leads through why me? to it is me, what am I going to do about it?" and, I'll be damned if I'll give in yet."

It is me. What am I going to do about it? That's the realization most of us come to at some point in our life. The question deserves an answer, especially if you are sitting at home, letting incontinence dictate and control your life. It is you, and you can do something about it. Perhaps meeting some of my book friends can help. They are inspirational people who have battled blindness, cancer, loss of a leg, fire, and immobilization. Every one of them, even Jory who died, is a winner. One of them dedicated their book: "Dedicated to all those who refuse to be told there is not a way." Why not join them? Incontinence can be cured or managed. My list of book friends follows. You might like to meet them:

Kathryn, by Barbara Miller and Charles Paul Conn, Berkley Books, 1981.


THANK YOU!

Editor's Note: This issue of the Informer was handwritten by an educational grant from Procter and Gamble, makers of Attends. The Simon Foundation does not endorse specific incontinence products or medical treatments. Inclusion of our Thank You column in no way implies endorsement. The following column was prepared by Procter and Gamble.

Take the Doubt out of Protection with ATTENDS

NOW AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL STORE

Attends Briefs and the new Attends Undergarments are now available in drug and grocery stores. The New Attends Undergarments are designed for people with moderate bladder control protection needs. Attends Undergarments provide better leakage protection than any other undergarment and have self-adjusting leg gathers for a snug, comfortable fit.

Attends Briefs are designed for people with major bladder control protection needs and provide the maximum Attends protection against leakage. Attends Briefs are used by more healthcare professionals than all other Briefs combined. Its patented one-way inner lining locks wetness in the absorbent layers below to help keep skin dry . . .

For a free sample of Attends Briefs or Undergarment, or if you have questions about incontinence, you can call Toll Free 1-800-4ATTENDS and talk to a Registered Nurse.

Don't forget to ask for your free copy of our brochure "Bladder Control Problems - What Is It - What Does It Mean To Me".

ATTENDS

NOW AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL STORE
cystoscope (which has already been inserted into the bladder) and on up to the ureters into the kidney. Using this wire guide the thicker ureteroscope is then positioned to visually examine the area for tumors, stones and other abnormalities.

**IVP OR INTRAVENOUS PYELOGRAM**
This is a procedure which allows the physician to x-ray the whole urologic system including the kidneys. A contrast media is injected into the blood stream. Then a series of x-rays is taken as the medium is excreted through the kidneys. Depending upon the timing and angle of the x-rays (called views) many questions can be answered by this test such as size, shape, and function of the kidney, the presence of kidney stones, cysts, obstructions and tumors, and changes which might indicate the kidney as a source of hypertension. The IVP also gives important information about the shape and function of the bladder.

**CYSTOMETROGRAM**
This test gives information such as capacity of the bladder, strength of the detrusor muscle which controls bladder emptying and the ability of the patient to sense bladder fullness.

It is done by inserting a catheter into the bladder. This catheter is then connected to a machine which will graph the findings for the physician. Next the bladder is slowly filled with either carbon dioxide (CO2) or sterile water in order to simulate natural bladder filling. The bladders reaction to this filling can then be studied. For instance, the bladder might empty at a very small capacity, indicating an unstable bladder. Or the bladder could fill to two or three times normal capacity, which could indicate diabetes, or damage to the nerves which control the bladder.

**VOIDING CYSTOURETHROGRAPHY OR CYSTOGRAM**
This test also uses contrast medium in order to x-ray the bladder. However, in this case the dye is inserted into the bladder by urethral catheterization. Due to this method of injecting dye, the test can ascertain whether some of the dye backs up the ureters into the kidney when the patient voids. This backup is called reflux and can be potentially damaging to the kidneys. The cystogram is also useful to document incomplete emptying of the bladder and to demonstrate bladder abnormalities which could affect continence.

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**DEAR INFORMER:**

I talk to people about incontinence all the time; encouraging them to get out of the house, building them up, reminding them that they are real people, and to keep their sense of humor, because in the long run none of the little incidents of our lives make much difference.

However, last night I had a terrible experience. I was at the store buying New Year’s Eve goodies, waiting in line with my groceries already on the conveyor belt to be checked out with people before me and after me, when I had a major accident. I soaked through my diaper, and there was a very small hole in the crotch of my plastic pants (I will always check for holes in the future), so I flooded straight through and made a very large puddle on the floor. I wanted to RUN out of there, but I was trapped between people and grocery carts. I felt that every eye was on me and my wet pants, shoes, and puddle. I stood there in silent humiliation; no witty remarks would come to mind.

Then I began thinking . . . “Medical problems are nothing to be ashamed of. I am a person. I am me. I have value.” It was almost a litany.

---

**DEAR DAVID:**

When I started to write this newsletter, I named the editorial ONE VOICE from a song by Barry Manilow, because I believed in what he had to say. Your letter proves this point.

ONE VOICE
Just One Voice
Singing in the darkness
All it takes is One Voice
Singing so they hear what’s on your mind.
And when you look around you’ll find
There’s more than
ONE VOICE
Singing in the darkness
Joining with your One Voice
Each and every note another octave
Hands are joined and fears unlocked
If only ONE VOICE
Would start it on its own
We need just One Voice
Facing the unknown
And then that One Voice
Would never be alone
It takes that One Voice
JUST ONE VOICE
Singing in the darkness
All it takes is ONE VOICE
Shout it out and let it ring
Just One Voice
It takes that ONE VOICE
And everyone will sing

David C. Maruna
5218 Ansonia Ct.
Orlando, FL 32809

PS. If you choose to print this letter you may use my full name and address. I would welcome letters from other incontinent people.