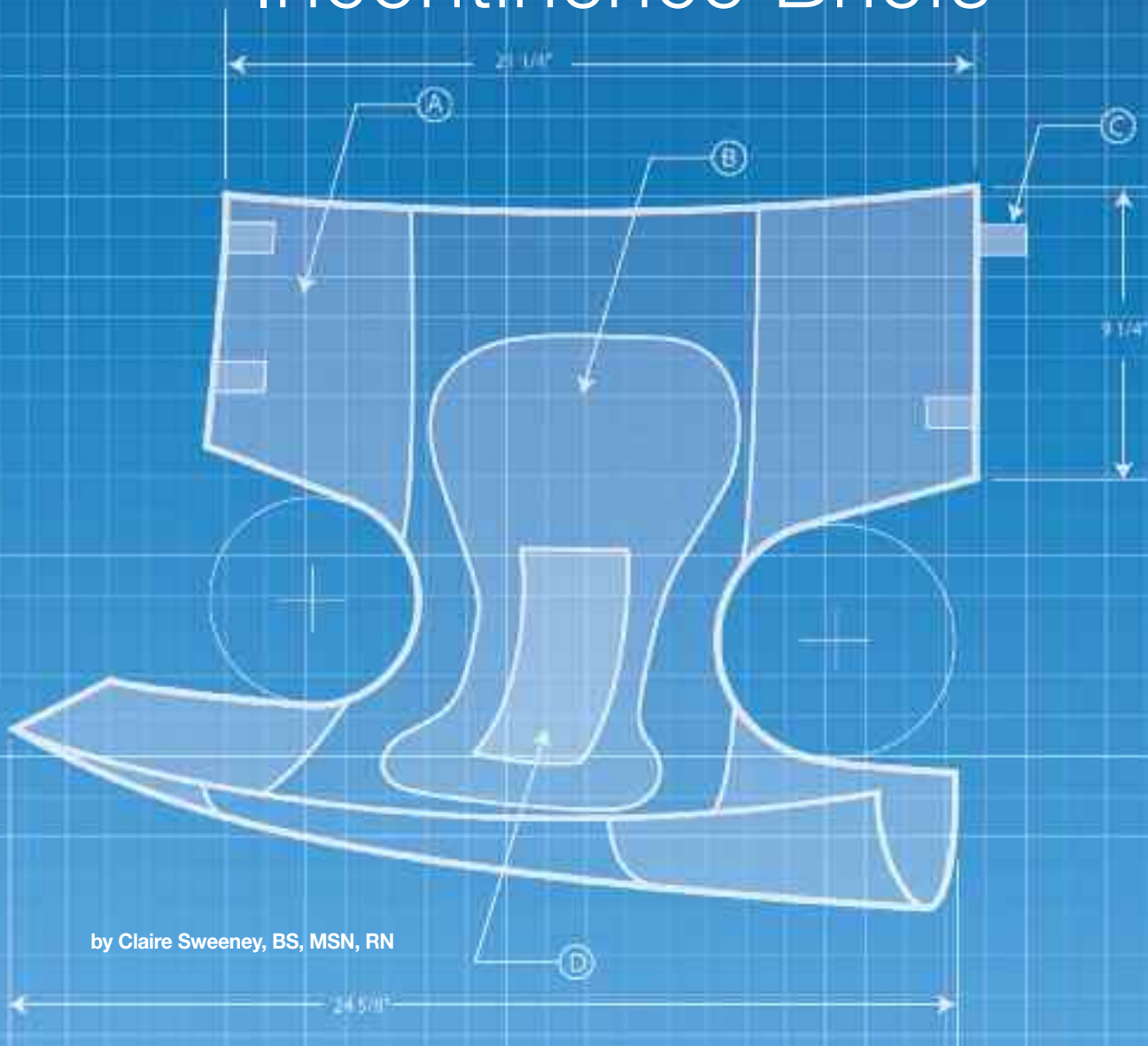


The Many Benefits of Correctly Sized Incontinence Briefs



Today's adult incontinence products come in many forms and sizes to meet individual needs. They are helpful in promoting healthy skin and maintaining the overall health of individuals who are incontinent.

The most frequently used products are briefs and protective underwear (pull-ups). The level of incontinence, gender, fit and use are all factors in product selection. Sizing is important for correct fit, leakage control and to help prevent skin damage.

Improper sizing can lead to problems

Frail skin can be damaged in a number of ways by an inappropriately fitted brief. A brief that is too small can lead to friction and pinching, which can result in skin damage. Briefs that are too large can cause even more problems. Products that are oversized create

increased pressure over the entire groin and delicate perineal area when the wearer is "wrapped" in excess layers of product. Ill-fitting garments do not fit snugly and are not able to quickly wick away moisture from urine, which can cause skin maceration. Skin maceration in turn can lead to further damage and potential infection.

Bigger ≠ better

A myth that compounds the sizing problem is that bigger is "better" or "easier to apply." Larger products do not hold more urine or feces. And the risk of damage to skin from an improperly fitted garment far outweighs the ease of applying an oversized product.

Larger sized products are often packed with fewer pieces per package, taking up more storage space than smaller products. They are

also more expensive. Incontinence products can represent up to one third of a facility's budget, so correct selection and sizing can have a huge impact on an institution's bottom line, as well as the care of its residents.

The importance of a properly fitted brief¹

- Proper fit can help prevent leakage, which in turn, protects the skin.
- An overly large brief may be exposing more skin surface area than necessary to urine and fecal material, which poses a risk to the skin.
- Improperly fitting briefs require more frequent changing, which can be expensive and time-consuming.
- A properly fitting brief is more comfortable for the wearer.
- Those who wear briefs are apt to be less sensitive about the touchy issue of "diapers" if the garment is somewhat discreet under clothing.

Who's in charge of incontinence care?

Incontinence care program responsibilities are often divided among several departments in a facility. Oftentimes nurses assess, central supply and /or environmental services orders (and sometimes delivers) supplies, and nursing assistants and caregivers actually apply the products.

All departments need to work as a team to ensure the correct product is available and used for a resident when necessary. It might be more convenient to order only large and extra large products due to ease of ordering and storage limitations, however, this practice will not meet the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines that call for the provision of "individualized interventions." People come in all shapes and sizes, and appropriate sizing of product promotes dignity, self-esteem, healthier skin, and cost-effectiveness.

3

Three Easy Steps for Better Sizing

Step 1: Measure across the front of the body; from hip bone to hip bone and over the abdomen. Or measure from thigh to thigh, if that area appears to be larger.

Step 2: Double the measurement from Step 1 and add two inches.

Step 3: Match the final measurement with the manufacturer's size chart.

Reference

1. Managing incontinence. In Pressure Ulcer Prevention Program - Nurse. Mundelein, Ill.: Medline Industries; 2008.

Determine Sizing of Absorbent Product

Determine and document the size by selecting the larger of the hip or waist measurement, or use sizing matrix reference based on gender/weight:

Gender: M F

Weight

Hip measurement

Waist measurement

Adult brief

Small: Green backing	20"–32" (51cm – 81cm)	
Medium: White backing	32"–42" (81cm – 107cm)	
Regular: Purple backing	40"–50" (102cm – 127cm)	
Large: Blue backing	48"–58" (122cm – 147cm)	
X-Large: Beige backing	59"–66" (150cm – 168cm)	
XX-Large: Green backing	60"–69" (152cm – 175cm)	
Bariatric: Beige backing	65"–90" (165cm – 229cm)	

Knit pants

Medium/Large: Blue/Brown waistband	20"–60" (51cm – 152cm)	
X-Large: Green waistband	45"–70" (114cm – 178cm)	
XX-Large: Purple waistband	50"–75" (127cm – 191cm)	

Disposable mesh pants

Medium	28"–40" (72cm – 102cm)	
Large:	30"–45" (76cm – 114cm)	
X-Large:	32"–48" (81cm – 122cm)	
XX-Large:	38"–58" (97cm – 147cm)	

Need additional help with sizing? Ask your Medline representative to arrange for a nurse to visit your facility for hands-on instruction.



About the Author

Claire Sweeney, BS, MSN, RN, has 22 years of nursing experience, primarily in geriatric settings, assisted living and long term care and her main areas of interest include infection control and pressure ulcer management.

Just one touch...



Comfort-Aire™ Disposable Briefs

One touch and you know Comfort-Aire disposable briefs are unique. Velvety soft side panels allow airflow for enhanced comfort and skin care. The comfortable outer cover helps prevent skin irritation.

One look and you can see the advantages. The wider hook tape tabs make it easier to grasp and won't stick to skin or gloves, and the compressed packaging is easier to handle.

One try and you'll understand. Comfort-Aire's enhanced, super-absorbent core keeps skin dry, which helps to keep it healthy.

Comfort-Aire. The right choice for ultimate patient comfort and protection.

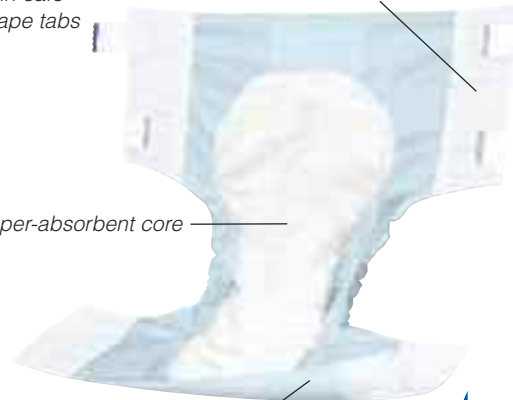
For more information about Comfort-Aire, contact your Medline representative or call us at 1-800-MEDLINE.

Extra-wide, skin-safe refastenable tape tabs

Breathable side panels

Enhanced, super-absorbent core

Soft cloth-like outer cover



www.medline.com