

Barrier creams & lotions

Barrier products are designed to be used specifically on people whose skin is at risk from breakdown following exposure to moisture. People at specific risk are those with continence problems.

Barrier products however should not be used routinely, careful assessment should be undertaken to identify any reversible causes of skin irritation before a decision is made to use a cream or lotion. Common, easily reversible causes of skin irritation in people with continence problems include;

- Poorly fitting continence pads
- Incorrect absorbency of pads being used
- Infrequent pad change regimes
- Inappropriate washing regimes
- Use of highly perfume washing products
- Sensitivity to biological wash powders

If these interventions fail then a trial of a barrier product may be beneficial. Products are available in two formats;

- Creams – which should only be used on intact skin
- Sprays – which can be used on broken skin (Advice from Tissue Viability Nurses can be sought in relation to use on people with pressure damage)

For people who are experiencing only very minor continence problems products such as **50/50 ointment** can be applied sparingly twice a day. This product should not be used in people who are using incontinence pads as once the ointment comes into contact with the pad it effectively blocks absorbency. This increases the person's risk of skin breakdown.

If you experience skin problems please mention this when you ring to order your prescription.