

Adult Briefs, Commodes and Automatic Toileting Systems Compared



An educational side by side view of the three main continence care pathways.

Understanding the Three Categories

Most continence care in Australia relies on one of three broad approaches: absorbent products (adult briefs and pads), transfer based solutions (commodes), or automated in bed hygiene systems. Each has a legitimate role. The challenge is matching the right approach to the right person, in the right setting, at the right stage of their care journey.

How They Work

- **Adult briefs and pads:** Absorb urine and, to a limited degree, faeces. The skin remains in contact with the soiled product until a carer performs a change.
- **Commodes:** A portable toilet chair placed beside the bed. Requires the user to transfer, either independently or with assistance.
- **Automated in bed systems:** Sensor driven devices that detect voiding, remove waste and provide real water cleansing without requiring transfers.

Detailed Comparison

Attribute	Adult Briefs	Commode	Automated (CareBidet)
Suitable for bed bound	Partial	No	Yes
Provides real water hygiene	No	Yes	Yes
Manual handling required	High	High	Low
Skin moisture exposure	High	Low	Minimal
Night time coverage	Passive absorb	Requires assist	Continuous automatic
Ongoing consumable use	High	Low	Very Low
Dignity preservation	Low	Medium	High
Upfront cost	Low	Low to Medium	Higher
Long term running cost	High	Low	Low
Environmental impact	High (landfill)	Low	Low

Choosing the Right Approach

For an ambulant person with occasional leakage, pads are usually appropriate. For someone who can transfer safely, a commode is often ideal. For those who are fully bed bound, especially with fragile skin, complex needs or limited carers, automated systems offer a step change in both clinical outcomes and dignity. Many care plans use a combination of approaches, adapting as needs change over time.

WeissenBlu Educational Note: No single product replaces good clinical judgement. If you are unsure which category best suits your situation, speak to an Occupational Therapist or continence nurse, or contact WeissenBlu for a no obligation assessment at [weissenblu.com.au](https://www.weissenblu.com.au).