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The Preferences of Toileting Habits and Routines in Older Adults

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Abstract

Background: The purpose of this study was to identify the preferences and the importance of differing categories of toileting habits and routines of older adults, before the onset of cognitive decline; these categories included materials, methods, clothing, and equipment aids.

Method: Forty-eight adults living in independent and assisted living homes responded to a self-developed quantitative survey regarding their toileting habits and routines and the importance attributed to the categories. Preferences were identified by frequency distributions and the importance of the categories were examined using a Chi-Square test. A Chi-Square test was also used to determine if there was a difference in responses between age groups, including 55-76, 77-87, and over 88. If the assumptions were not met a Fisher's Exact test was used.

Results: Findings revealed that there is considerable variation in preferences for adults ages 55 years and older. No significant differences were found in responses between age groups.

Discussion: Knowledge and incorporation of these preferences into care can promote person-centered care, maintain dignity, and prolong cognitive decline. Future research is needed to understand the toileting preferences of a greater, more diverse sample of older adults and to understand how these preferences may change over time.

Key words: *Alzheimer's disease, dementia, caregiver burden, habits, occupational therapy, person-centered care, preferences, urinary incontinence, routines, toileting*