

Product reviews

Wearever Washable Incontinence Underwear

PrimeLife Fibers Inc., Durham, NC, USA, £10.24 (L-123, Lace Sides Brief)/£18.70 (MB-200, Men's 2-in-1 Boxer)
www.mypelvichealth.co.uk

Wearever is a range of washable incontinence underwear that is now available from iMEDicare Ltd through National Health Service (NHS) Prescription Services (iMEDicare 2021a). Direct-to-consumer prices are quoted, and patients do not need to pay VAT.

From a clinician's point of view, what is impressive about this collection is the variety of products for men that are just as aesthetically pleasing as the women's garments. Since there is a wide range of styles, colours and absorbencies, Wearever is a product that is suitable for almost anyone. The gender-dependent colours include white, beige, dark blue and black, and absorbencies vary from 120 to 650 mL. The women's knickers range from lace-fronted, high-leg briefs to maximum absorbency full briefs, while men can choose from either Y-fronts or boxer shorts. You would not know that these garments are incontinence underwear from the pictures in

the men's and women's catalogues (iMEDicare 2021b, c).

Three of my patients tested Wearever underwear products. The first was an 82-year-old woman who had delivered four babies, and now suffered from stress urinary incontinence (SUI) and mildly bothersome insensible daytime leaking. After being measured, she chose to try out both the 120- and 180-mL absorbencies. The patient reported that these products were comfortable and affordable. She was able to stop buying the pads that she had previously been using twice a day. Her life was made much easier because she now only had to wear one pair of knickers a day. She was happy with the design, and even a little thrilled with the prospect of lace on an incontinence product!

The second patient was a 34-year-old woman who had sustained a third-degree tear during the birth of her first child 10 weeks previously, and was suffering from moderate mixed UI (MUI). Even after being measured for the underwear, she found the fit slightly unflattering. The patient reported that the product did its job: she no longer worried about leaking onto her clothes, and she did not need to change her pad regularly. The pants held urine well and there were



no unpleasant smells. She also felt that it was fantastic that the NHS supported her in this way after such a traumatic birth. The patient found that the underwear felt bulky and tight if worn under jeans, and if she was “going out with the girls”, she resorted to pads again, which are thinner but obviously need to be changed more frequently. She did not regard Wearever underwear as a permanent solution, but rather, as a temporary aid to help her through a short-term transition back to continence that did its job more than adequately.

The third patient was a 75-year-old man who had undergone a prostatectomy 1 year ago. He suffered from ongoing MUI, and also heavy insensible leaking during the day and night. Unfortunately, physiotherapy had not been beneficial, and therefore, he was looking for something to help with his leaking because he was keen to avoid further surgery. This product has been life-changing for him. Since he considers himself to be something of a ladies’ man, it has enabled him to regain part of his social life. He can now go wining and dining again without having to wear pads, especially overnight.

Overall, all three patients reported that these Wearever products offered a great alternative to pads. For the two older people, the style and comfort were more than adequate. The younger woman did not like the design, but she was aware that this was not a long-term solution for her. All three patients were happy with the absorbency and washability of the products, and they all reported that they would continue to use these after the trial period and would recommend Wearever to others in their situation.

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References

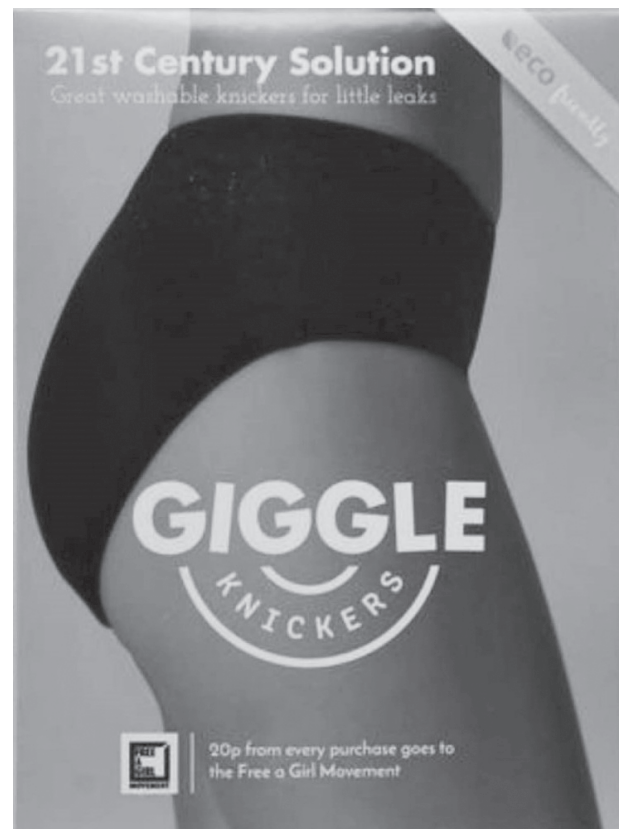
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Giggle Knickers

Giggle Knickers Ltd, London, £12.99 (Brief)/£14.99 (High Waisted)
www.giggleknickers.co.uk

Giggle Knickers are washable cotton incontinence underpants with an inbuilt protective panel to absorb light to moderate urinary leaks. The female founders of the company were keen to destigmatize UI, and develop an environmentally friendly alternative to disposable incontinence pads. With hygiene waste rising globally, and disposable products known to include potentially harmful substances such as synthetic fibres and bleach, any shift in the opposite direction is to be applauded. Furthermore, 20p from each sale is donated to the Free a Girl charity to fight the sexual exploitation of children.

We selected patients who had symptoms of mild to moderate UI to test this product, and received generally positive feedback. Giggle Knickers have successfully integrated a discreet and relatively thin panel in their product that is neither bulky nor uncomfortable, and can hold up to 30 mL (i.e. 1.5 tbsps) of urine. The patients reported no overflow issues when they wore the pants, and said that they felt “safe” from damp clothes. They washed the garments at 40°C and used tumble driers, as specified in the instructions. However, there is no information on the



company website regarding the use of fabric conditioner.

Giggle Knickers are available in two styles, Brief (UK sizes 4–18) or High Waisted (UK sizes 4–24), which theoretically provides customers with options, but is potentially a little restrictive for those who prefer other underwear designs. Three colours are available (i.e. navy blue, light blue and cream); however, our patients revealed that they would like more options, such as white and black, or perhaps, patterned material to reflect what is available on the wider market. Some highlighted the fact that the seams on the edging of the garment are thicker than most high-street underwear brands, and may pose some visible panty line issues!

This environmentally conscious brand has gone the extra mile to ensure that their mailbags are compostable and can be used for returns. One slight snag is that Giggle Knickers are only available to purchase online, which may make this product less accessible to our older or less technologically savvy patients.

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I am a 71-year-old woman who has been an orienteer for over 30 years. Bladder leaks and sometimes floods have been a problem for me for a long time, but I did not like the idea of wearing pads.

Once I began intensive pelvic floor exercises, things began to improve. Then I found Giggle Knickers 2.5 years ago, and now I always wear these as a precaution when I compete.

The underpants are made of cotton and very comfortable. Sometimes I have to wear these for several hours because the nature of my sport means that I may have a 30-min walk to the start of the race, and then compete for between 20 min and 1.5 h. Toilet facilities are also often limited prior to events. The absorbent gusset functions really well, and even if I do leak, I feel no discomfort or chafing. There is also no smell of urine if I have a small leakage.

Giggle Knickers wash very well at 30 or 40 °C, and I still wear the three pairs that I bought early in 2019 in rotation, although obviously not as much over the past 18 months. These have given me the confidence to go out and compete secure in the knowledge that I will not feel embarrassed if I leak. For me, this is a brilliant product.

Anonymous

Modibodi Period Underwear

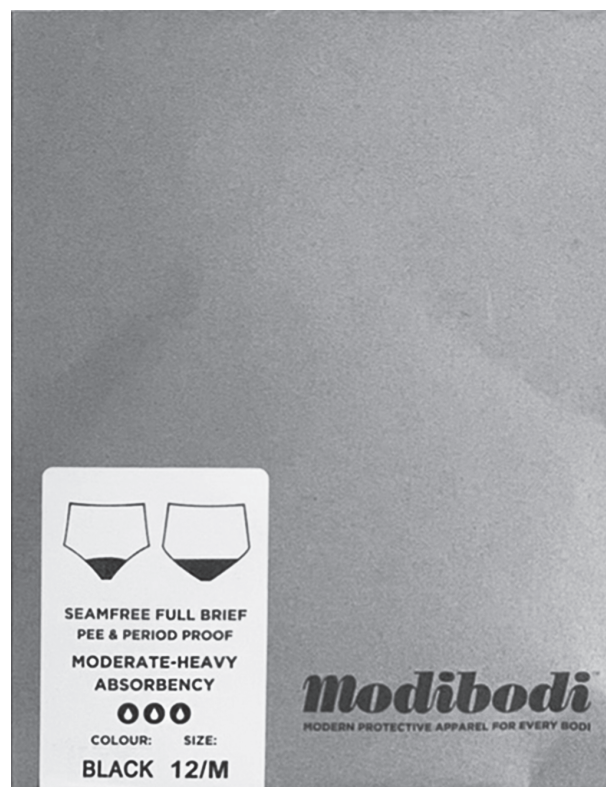
Modibodi, Balmain, NSW, Australia, £24.00 (Seamfree Full Brief)

www.modibodi.co.uk

I was asked to trial medium-absorbency Modibodi period underwear products for incontinence purposes. However, I was only able to test two of the three pairs that I was sent because one was too big for me. It should be noted that I have a history of 90% SUI when running, and 10% with other occasional stressors. Generally, I only suffer from moderate SUI, but if my fatigue levels are high, then it can become severe.

I was asked to trial the product for UI when running and not while on my period. This differs from its intended use, but I had heard good things about the ability of the underpants to maintain user dryness, so I gave these a go!

My first impressions were good. Although the pants are not small (I am not sure that that would be possible because of the intended use), these are well designed and resemble “sport knickers”, so I thought that the product would be great for running. The pants are also comfortable with good stretch and give. To be honest, I did not notice these at all initially. I wore the pants under my running leggings and these did not feel bulky.



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Therefore, it is unfortunate that the product did not meet my needs. Within 15 min, it was apparent that the pants were not keeping me dry, and the run became uncomfortable and embarrassing because I was part of a group. Thankfully, it was getting dark. This was such a shame because I had high hopes that these might go some way to providing me with a comfortable solution to leakage when running. The pants that I wore were for medium-flow UI. I have not tried those

for heavy flow, but fear I that I do not have the confidence to do so now.

In conclusion, Modibodi period underwear is good for small leaks, but cannot contain a flood, and thus, will not be suitable for women who have moderate to severe SUI or urge UI. Overall, the product is comfortable and aesthetically pleasing, but unfortunately, it does not meet my functional needs.

Anonymous