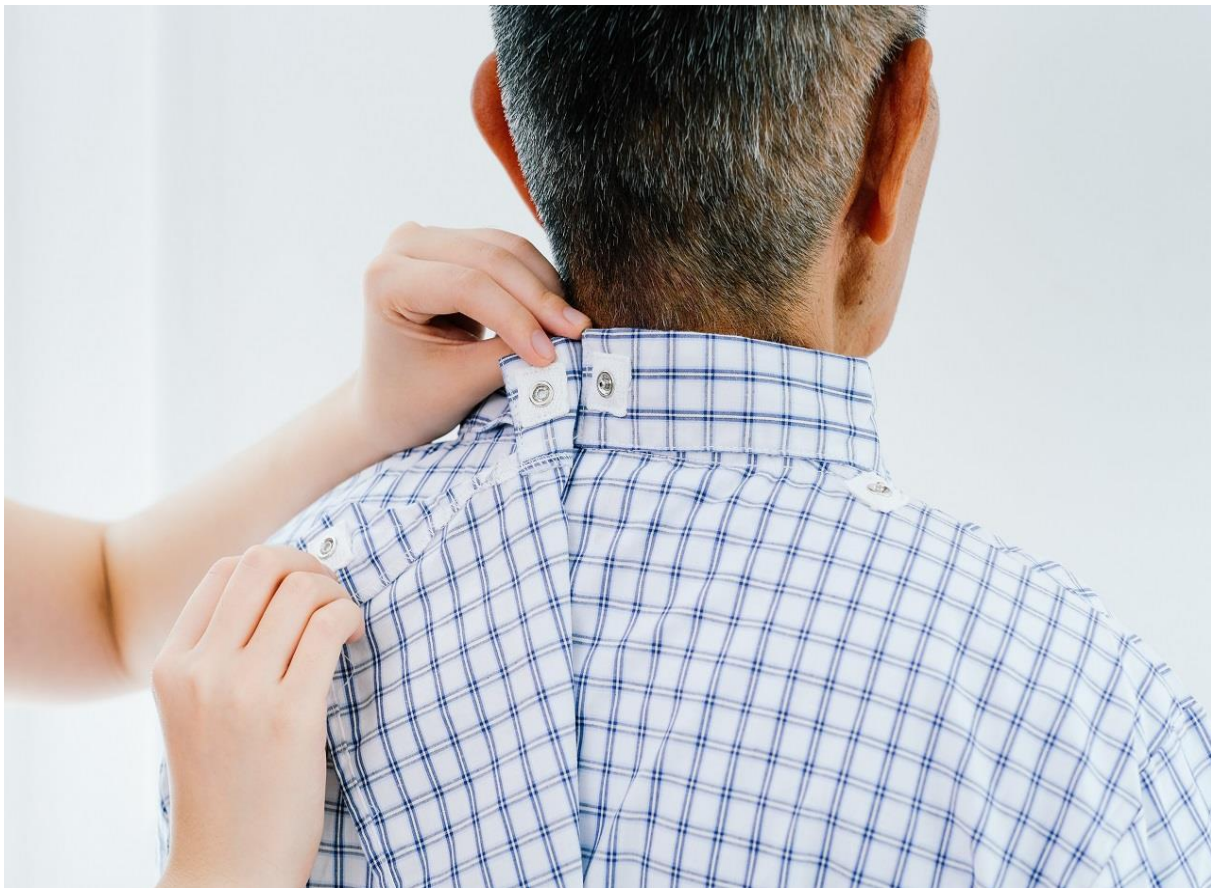


Dressing: Tops and Bottoms

Clothes can be difficult to put on or take off. This may be due to reduced strength, poor balance, restricted movement, injuries and other health conditions. Here are some options to look your best!



Dressing Techniques

Many dressing difficulties can be made easier by using different techniques or equipment.

Helpful tips:

- Collect all items you will need and put them within easy reach before you start.
- Sit on a chair to complete some of the task, for example when getting your feet into the trousers and up to your knees. Some people may find it easier to dress in a lying position. A chair can be better than the edge of a bed as a chair is firmer, and a bed can sometimes be too high. Sitting on a chair may also be safer than sitting on a bed which could move if mounted on castors
- Allow plenty of time to get dressed or undressed. Dressing tends to take longer than undressing. Rushing makes it more difficult.
- Dress your affected limb first and undress it last. Your unaffected arm can help your affected arm.



Dressing Equipment

Button hook

A **button hook** is a piece of wire with a handle. Pass the wire loop through the buttonhole, hook it around the button and pull it back through the buttonhole. There are many different button hooks available. Some button hooks also come with a hook to help with opening and closing zips.



Reacher/Dressing Stick

A **reacher** or **dressing stick** can help you to grasp your trousers, underwear or other clothes when they are beyond your reach.

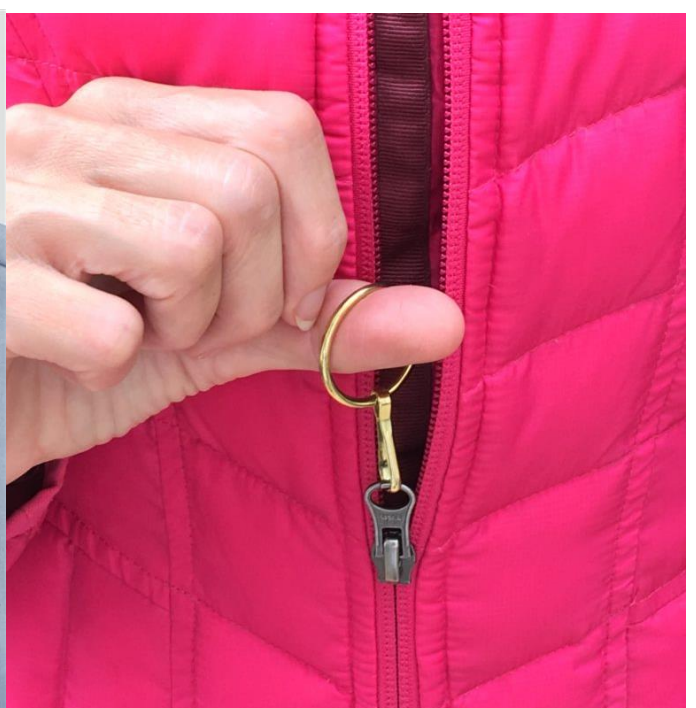


Adapting Clothing

Your own clothing can be adapted to allow you to still wear the clothes you own. Some companies make clothing specifically designed to make them easier to get on and off.

Shirts and Tops

- Add **finger loops from material or key rings** to the zipper tab to make it easier to pull.
- **Replace buttons** on a shirt or jacket with larger ones. Buttons with a slightly raised rim or toggles can be easier to do up than those which are completely flat.
- **Clothing without buttons or zips** such as t-shirts can be easier to put on and take off.
- **Give the illusion of a shirt with buttons.** Buttons can be sewn on top of a buttonhole and then hook-and-loop tape sewn under the button to fasten the shirt
- Two buttons can be sewn together with elastic to create an **expanding cuff link**



Trousers, Pants and Skirts

- Add **finger loops** to make the zips on trousers and skirts easier to pull. Finger loops can also be added to clothes to help pull them up.
- Remove all zips and buttons and add an **elastic waist band** on your trousers or skirts to make it easy to pull them on and off.

Buying adaptive clothing

- Tops that open at the back. Two pieces of material overlap and attach together with hook-and-loop to create the illusion of an ordinary top
- Tops with hook-and-loop openings. Some tops have larger openings to make it easier to put on and take them off
- An adaptation for trousers, pants and skirts is having larger openings with hook-and-loop closure. Hook-and-loop openings can be in front, at the back or at the side. Which type of opening suits you will depend on your abilities and what you prefer.



MAGNETIC, HOOK & LOOP FLY



Clothing Considerations

Selecting the right material and styles of clothes can make dressing easier.

- Choose loose fitting clothes and clothes with 'stretch', such as fleecy garments or cardigans.
- Choose trousers and skirts with no fastenings, such as those with elastic waist bands.
- Select smooth and slippery fabric, such as silk blouses, which can provide some 'slip' to allow clothes to be put on and taken off easily.
- Choose shirts and tops with no fasteners so that you can just slip them on. Tops with a V-shape neck opening or larger head hole will be easier to put on and take off.
- Wear several lightweight layers, such as a shirt and a light jacket rather than one thick, heavy garment.

More information

For further information, or advice, about any item contained in this information sheet, please contact Independent Living Centre Tasmania Inc.(ILCT):

- Call 1300 452 827 to speak to a health professional.
- Visit our website www.ilct.com.au or email info@ilct.com.au.
- ILCT visits communities around Tasmania. Contact ILCT to find out when we will be in your area.

ILCT provides Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology, and Allied Health Assistant services, on a fee-for-service basis. Our team delivers comprehensive assessments and support that may include assistive technology, home modifications, communication aids, and other tailored interventions to enhance independence and quality of life.

ILCT specifically provides supports to those aged over 18, who are Tasmanian residents and are of any culturally-diverse background. ILCT are a registered provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Independent Living Centre Tas Inc. (ILCT) acknowledges the generous support of the Tasmanian Government – Department of Health through the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, and the Australian Government – Department of Health and Aged Care through the My Aged Care – Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). Their ongoing contributions enable the continued provision of these information sheets and our information services.

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