developmental age of at least 4 years. The prevalence of fecal incontinence in the United States is 0.5–11%. The majority of patients are women and aged >65. A higher incidence of incontinence is seen among parous women. One-half of patients with fecal incontinence also suffer from urinary incontinence. The majority of incontinence is a result of obstetric injury to the pelvic floor, either while carrying a fetus or during the delivery. An anatomic sphincter defect may occur in up to 32% of women following childbirth regardless of visible damage to the perineum. Risk factors at the time of delivery include prolonged labor, the use of forceps, and the need for an episiotomy. Symptoms of incontinence can present two or more decades after obstetric injury. Medical conditions known to contribute to the development of fecal incontinence are listed in **Table 328-5**.

TABLE 328-5 Medical Conditions That Contribute to Symptoms of Fecal Incontinence

Neurologic Disorders
• Dementia
• Brain tumor
• Stroke
• Multiple sclerosis
• Tabes dorsalis
• Cauda equina lesions
Skeletal Muscle Disorders
• Myasthenia gravis
• Myopathies, muscular dystrophy
Miscellaneous
• Hypothyroidism
• Irritable bowel syndrome
• Diabetes
• Severe diarrhea
• Scleroderma