

stop you leaking. If you drink too little, the urine becomes very concentrated. This irritates the bladder and makes it want to empty more often even when there is very little in it. A lack of fluids can also lead to urinary tract infections.

- Don't drink all your fluids at once. Space your fluid intake out during the day. If you drink a lot at once, you can expect the need to go to the toilet urgently not too long afterwards.
- Some drinks seem to irritate the bladder and make you want to go to the toilet more often. Usually these are alcohol and drinks with caffeine in them such as coffee, tea, cola, chocolate drinks, and carbonated energy drinks; try and reduce caffeinated drinks to 1 or 2 cups a day.
- Avoid drinking within two hours of going to bed as this increases your chances of getting up at night.

MISSION STATEMENT

To act as a model institution to alleviate the suffering of patients with cancer through the application of modern methods of curative and palliative therapy irrespective of their ability to pay, the education of health care professionals and the public and perform research into the causes and treatment of cancer.

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Urinary Bladder Training



Shaukat Khanum
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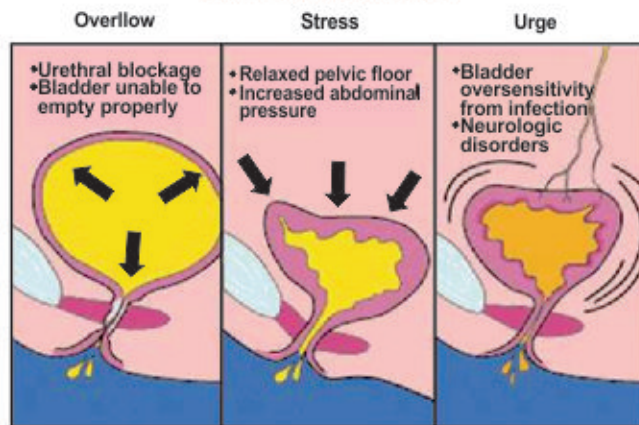
Normal bladder function

Your bladder normally stores urine produced by the kidneys. Bladder acts like a balloon which fills gradually, whereas outlet of urine is kept closed by urethra. This is made possible with the help of pelvic floor muscles beneath the bladder that sweep around urethra.

Overactive bladder

Three of the most common problems are frequency, urgency and urge leakage. Frequency means going to the toilet more than 7 times a day. If you get up to go to the toilet more than once at night this is called nocturia. Urgency is the sudden and overwhelming feeling that you need to go to the toilet RIGHT NOW, and if you leak when you feel like this, it is called urge leakage.

Types of Incontinence



What is bladder training?

1. Bladder training programs help you to increase the time between visits to the toilet, help you increase the amount your bladder will hold, and help you to control the feelings of urgency when the bladder contracts unnecessarily. Bladder training is about helping

yourself to regain bladder control.

2. Your bladder may have taken many weeks, months or years establishing its bad habits, so you will not regain your bladder control instantly.

It will take time, commitment and patience to train your bladder into good habits. Be encouraged, most people notice some improvement within 2 weeks, although it may take 3 months or more to regain bladder control.

How to overcome frequency?

1. Check your urinary diary. How often are you going to the toilet during the day? If the visits are less than 2-3 hours apart, you need to try and increase the time between visits to the toilet. For example, if you are going every hour, set your target at an hour and 15 minutes.

2. If you can hold on for your target time, and can do this for 3 or 4 days in a row, increase the time again. Gradually increase the time between visits to the toilet until you are going every 2-3 hours during the day.

3. Try to cut down the visits to the toilet that you make 'just in case'.

How to overcome urgency and urge leakage?

Try all of these ideas to control the urgency and make the bladder wait. See which ideas work best for you and then use them when you need to.

1. Tighten your pelvic floor muscles as hard as you can and hold on for as long as you can. Keep doing this until the feeling of urgency goes away or is under control. Contracting the pelvic floor muscles helps to

squeeze the urethra (tube from the bladder) shut and prevent leakage.

2. Tighten your pelvic floor muscles quickly and as hard as you can, then let go. Repeat this several times in a row. Some women find that several contractions in a row work better than trying to hold on to a contraction for a long time.

3. Put firm pressure on the perineum (crotch area). You can do this by crossing your legs or sitting down on a firm surface. This also sends a message to the bladder via the nerves that the outlet from the bladder is closed so it should wait before it tries to empty.

4. Distract your mind as best you can. For example, some people start to count backwards from 100, but any form of mental distraction or relaxation is good.

5. Change your position if this decreases the feeling of urgency. Some people find that leaning forward a little helps.

6. Stay still when you get an urgent bladder contraction and control the urge. You will not be able to hold on, stay in control, and rush to the toilet all at the same time.

Life Style Changes

If you are overweight, have a problem that makes you cough a lot (eg. asthma, bronchitis) or suffer from constipation, you should discuss this with the doctor, physiotherapist or continence advisor, as all these things can make urinary leakage worse. Some medications make it more difficult to control the bladder, and you should check with your doctor if you have any worries about this.

- Drink normally, at least 6-8 cups (1000 - 1500mls) of fluid per day unless advised otherwise by your doctor. Don't stop drinking because you think it will