



EASY STEPS TO KEEP YOUR BLADDER HEALTHY

Good bladder habits can improve bladder control

Poor bladder habits can lead to poor bladder control. This includes wetting yourself. This brochure has some easy steps you can take to keep your bladder healthy.

Step 1 — Use good toilet habits

- It is normal to go to the toilet four to six times a day.
- You shouldn't get up to go to the toilet more than once a night.
- Don't get into the habit of going to the toilet 'just in case'. Try to go to the toilet only when your bladder is full. Going to the toilet just before you go to bed is fine.
- Women should sit down to go to the toilet. Do not hover over the toilet seat.
- Take your time. Relax when you are on the toilet. This helps your bladder to empty out fully. If you rush, you may not empty your bladder fully and over time you could get a bladder infection.

Step 2 — Look after your pelvic floor muscles

- Keep your pelvic floor muscles strong with pelvic floor muscle training.
- Call the National Continence Helpline 1800 33 00 66 and ask for the brochure about Pelvic Floor Muscle Training. There is a brochure for men and women.
- See a continence physiotherapist or continence nurse advisor to check that you are training your pelvic floor muscles the right way.

Step 3 — Keep good bowel habits

- Avoid constipation.
- Do not strain when using your bowels. This puts extra load onto your pelvic floor muscles and may weaken the muscles. The pelvic floor muscles help with bladder and bowel control.
- Eat two pieces of fruit and five serves of vegetables daily.
- Keep active. Physical activity helps to keep your bowels regular.

Step 4 — Drink fluid every day

- Fluid is everything you drink. Fluid includes milk, juice and soup. The best fluid to drink is water.
- Cut down on how much caffeine and alcohol you drink. These may upset your bladder. There is caffeine in chocolate, coffee and tea. Avoid fizzy drinks which contain caffeine. These include cola and sports drinks.

Step 5 — Seek help

Seek help from your doctor, continence physiotherapist or continence nurse advisor if you:

- wet yourself when you cough, sneeze, laugh or lift, even if it is only a few drops
- leak when you stand up or do sports or other activity
- have an urgent need to pass urine and:
 - you have a strong feeling of not being able to hold on
 - you leak on the way to the toilet
 - you don't always get to the toilet in time.
- pass small amounts of urine often through the day
- have to get up more than once a night to pass urine. Overnight means during an eight-hour sleep
- have trouble starting your stream of urine
- have to strain to pass urine
- have a stream that stops and starts instead of a smooth flow
- feel your bladder is not empty when you have finished passing urine
- feel burning or pain while passing urine
- feel a need to give up things you enjoy because of poor bladder or bowel control, such as walking, aerobics or dancing
- notice any change in your regular bladder habits that worry you
- wet the bed past the age of five.

SEEK HELP

You are not alone. Poor bladder and bowel control can be cured or better managed with the right treatment. If you do nothing, it might get worse.

Phone expert advisors on the National Continence Helpline for free:

- advice
- resources
- information about local services.

1800 33 00 66* (8am–8pm Monday to Friday AEST)

To arrange for an interpreter through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National), phone 13 14 50 Monday to Friday and ask for the National Continence Helpline.

Information in other languages is also available from continence.org.au/other-languages

For more information: continence.org.au, pelvicfloorfirst.org.au, bladderbowel.gov.au

* Calls from mobiles are charged at applicable rates.

