

Good Bladder Habits for Everyone





Good bladder habits

It is normal to go to the toilet between 4 to 8 times a day and no more than once or twice at night.

Diabetes warning:

If you are always feeling thirsty and have to urinate (pass water or wee) all the time, tell the doctor or the health worker. It is important you are checked to make sure diabetes (sugar sickness) is not the problem.

What are the warning signs of bladder control problems?

Good bladder habits are important for a healthy life.

Poor bladder habits can lead to poor bladder control and sometimes incontinence.

Incontinence is trouble controlling your bladder or bowel where you may wet yourself or dirty yourself.

Here are some simple steps that everyone should follow to keep their bladder healthy.





Hints to keep your bladder healthy

STEP 1: Fluid intake


- Increase the amount of water you drink over 2 or 3 days to between 6 to 8 cups of water a day.
- Limit the amount of caffeine, cola and alcohol you drink because they irritate the bladder. If you must drink tea or coffee, instant coffee contains less caffeine than filtered coffee and tea contains less caffeine than coffee.


STEP 2: Practice good toilet habits

- Don't get into the habit of going to the toilet 'just in case' try to go only when your bladder is full and you need to go. (However, emptying your bladder before going to bed is fine).
- Take your time when urinating (passing water or wee) so that your bladder has an opportunity to empty completely.

For women this should be while sitting. If you rush this may mean you don't completely empty your bladder and cause possible urinary infections.

STEP 3: Keep good bowel habits

- Keep your bowel movements regular and avoid constipation (not being able to or having difficulty doing goona or cooney).
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Always straining when using your bowel can weaken your pelvic floor muscles.

STEP 4: Look after your pelvic floor muscles

- Keep your pelvic floor muscles strong with regular pelvic floor exercises (this does not mean that you have to do exercises on the floor).
- The 'Pelvic Floor Exercises' brochure in this series, may help. (There are Pelvic Floor Exercise brochures for men and women.)

STEP 5: Speak to your doctor, health worker or continence adviser if you have problems with any of the following:

- if you leak any urine when you don't mean to;
 - leak urine (regardless of amount) when you cough, sneeze, laugh, stand, lift or when you play sport or other physical activity;
 - an urgent need to pass urine, not being able to hold on or not getting to the toilet in time;
 - passing small amounts of urine often and consistently such as more than 8 times each day in small amounts of less than 200 mls (about a teacup);
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- having to get up several times during the night to pass urine;
 - wetting the bed if you are over the age of 5 years;
 - difficulty getting your urine started or it stops and starts instead of flowing out smoothly;
 - having to strain to pass urine;
 - feeling that the bladder is not empty once urine has been passed;
 - a feeling of burning or discomfort while passing urine; and
 - any change in your regular bladder pattern that you are worried about.

If you have any of the above signs of bladder control problems please get help from either your doctor or a health worker.

Remember

You are not alone. Incontinence can be prevented, better managed, treated and sometimes cured.

Who can help?

- Your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service.
 - Doctors.
 - A special continence adviser.
 - National Continence Helpline Freecall™ **1800 33 00 66.**
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- Visit the website at www.bladderbowel.gov.au or the National Public Toilet Map website at www.toiletmap.gov.au

Other brochures in this series:

- Continenence Myths and Facts
- Bladder Training
- What is Urinary Incontinence
- What is a Continenence Assessment
- Continenence Products and Appliances
- Constipation and Urinary Incontinence
- Pelvic Floor Exercises for Men
- Bladder Problems and the Prostate
- Pelvic Floor Exercises for Women
- Dementia and Urinary Incontinence
- A List of Ten Frequently Asked Questions
- Constipation
- Continenence Comic



Australian Government

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