

BLADDER RETRAINING FOR URGE INCONTINENCE

With urge incontinence you frequently feel a strong uncontrollable urge or urinate. The cause is an oversensitive bladder, which feels full even when it contains a small amount of urine. The bladder contracts unexpectedly and if the pelvic muscles are weak, the urine in the bladder is expelled. Urge incontinence often co-exists with stress incontinence.

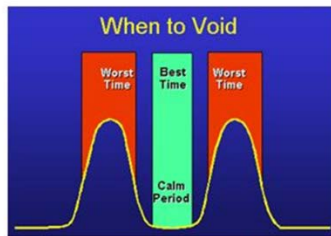
The aim of bladder training is to restore the person with urgency and/or urge incontinence to a more normal and convenient pattern of voiding.

To begin you will need a daily diary and pencil, a clock, a timer and determination to stick with it.



When the Urge Strikes...

- Stop and stay still. Do NOT rush to the toilet
- Sit down if you can.
- Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles quickly 3 to 5 times and repeat as needed. Don't relax muscles in between.
- Relax the rest of your body. Take a deep breath.
- Concentrate on suppressing the urge.
- Wait until the urge calms down.
- Walk to the bathroom at a normal pace.
- If the urge returns on the way to the bathroom, stop and repeat.



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BLADDER RETRAINING SCHEDULE

Urinate when you first get up in the morning. If you have a hard time making it to the toilet when you get up, squeeze the muscle that holds back your urine before you get out of bed. Then get out of bed and walk SLOWLY to the toilet. Empty your bladder as completely as possible and record amount voided. Now set your timer for _____ hour(s).

When the timer sounds, go to the toilet, even if you don't feel a need to empty your bladder. Record amount of urine and reset your timer. Continue this throughout the day until you go to bed.

When you have had four-five days without leakage, increase your time interval by 15 minutes.

When you feel the urge to urinate before the timer sounds try to distract yourself by thinking of complex tasks or something especially fun or happy. The feeling that you need to go should pass and you may be able to wait until the timer sounds.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Avoid foods and drinks that irritate your bladder. Alcoholic beverages, coffee, tea, highly spiced foods and cigarette smoking can make problems worse.
2. Drink normal amounts of fluid, including six-eight glasses of water each day.
3. Establish regular bowel habits. If you are constipated, add fiber to your diet.
4. Avoid going to the toilet "just in case". This may turn into a bad habit, and lead to frequent urination.
5. Remember, working with controlling the urge takes time, patience and a positive attitude. Your bladder problems did not happen overnight and they will not be cured overnight-or even in a week or two.