

Bladder Drills

How to decrease your urinary frequency and urgency

Many people need to urinate a little more frequently as they age. However, we should be able to wait for at least 2-3 hours between trips to the bathroom and not be up to urinate more than twice a night. If necessary, we should be able to resist the urge to urinate for at least half an hour after the first sensation. The goal is to optimize the time between visits to the toilet to 2-3 hours, depending on your fluid intake.

Here is what you could do to reduce your urinary frequency + urgency:

When you feel that you do have to urinate, look at the time and wait for at least 5-10 minutes. If after waiting this time, you do not feel that you urgently have to go, do not go. Wait until the next time you feel the urge. For some (or in time with practice), it may be possible to wait again. If not, go urinate, but next time, do the same, and try to persist longer, within a 3 hour range.

If you are heading to the bathroom, try to approach the bathroom calmly and concentrate on holding in your urine by squeezing the pelvic floor muscles. (Like holding in gas) Walking to the bathroom calmly and confidently will promote success. When you get to the bathroom, remain calm, even though you feel uncomfortable. Concentrate on the positive thought that you will be able to hold it until you are on the toilet. Do not worry if you have the occasional inability to delay the urge or the occasional incontinence. These symptoms did not occur overnight, and cannot be helped without persistence and consistency. It is going to be uncomfortable because you are used to holding smaller amounts in your bladder. In time however, if you follow this information sheet's instructions faithfully, you will be able to urinate when you feel that it is convenient for you, rather than your bladder dictating to you.

Fluid Intake considerations:

Caffeine is a powerful diuretic, which means that it makes us produce and empty more urine. This can be a dehydrating effect. Caffeine also irritates the inner bladder lining, causing urinary urgency and frequency. Cut down or stop coffee, teas, colas and chocolate as much as possible for better control. Herbal teas clearly noted to be without caffeine, decaf coffee or decaf colas are less irritating to the bladder. Alcohol can also interfere with bladder control as it also acts as a diuretic, irritant and may interfere with normal bladder sensation.

Clear fluids, especially water are your bladder best friend. Try **gradually** increasing your water intake to about 5-8 glasses of water per day. If waking up at night to urinate is a problem, it is also important to decrease any fluid intake after supper and stop fluids when possible about 2 hours before going to bed. (Take medications with sips of water)

Restricting your fluid intake to treat frequency or incontinence is not a good idea. By doing so, your kidneys will continue to produce urine, but the urine will be very concentrated (undiluted) and full of waste, therefore more of an irritant to your bladder lining.

Take control by avoiding irritants, being calm, confident and persistent!