

Keeping Your Bladder Healthy

Do you leak pee (urine) when you laugh, cough, sneeze, or lift things? Do you have to rush to the toilet? Muscles in your pelvic floor and around your bladder help you pee. These muscles can get damaged or weak for different reasons. If these muscles are not working well, you can leak urine.

What can help you stop leaking urine?

Talk to your family doctor or nurse practitioner

Tell them if you have bladder leaks.

Let them know if your bladder leaks:

- when you have the urge to pee, or
- when you do not have the urge to pee

Ask if your health conditions or medicines affect your bladder.

Ask to see an expert in bladder health, called a continence advisor.

Try not to irritate your bladder

Drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluids each day (unless you have been told differently because of a medical condition). When you drink enough fluid, it dilutes your urine and keeps your bladder from being irritated.

Drink fluids such as water or diluted, non-citrus juice.

Try not to eat or drink foods and fluids that irritate your bladder. These include foods that are acidic or spicy, and fluids that are caffeinated, alcoholic, citrus, or carbonated. If you cannot stay away from them, eat or drink less of them.

Stay active

Do lower-impact activities, such as walking, to keep your muscles strong. This helps you get to the toilet on time.

If you leak urine with higher-impact activities such as running, do lower-impact activities.

Ask about exercises that help your stomach and pelvic floor muscles work better together.

Reduce pressure on your bladder and pelvic floor

Go to the toilet every 2 to 3 hours. After you pee, wait a few seconds and try to pee again. This helps you empty your bladder.

Keep your bowels regular. Eat foods high in fibre, such as whole grains and vegetables.

Ask your healthcare team about healthy ways to reach the right weight for you.

Stop smoking. Coughing puts pressure on your bladder and pelvic floor. Some chemicals in cigarettes can irritate your bladder.

Go to bed with an empty bladder

Drink most of your fluids during the day. Drink less 2 hours before bedtime.

Put your legs up for an hour after dinner, if you have swelling in your legs. This can help get rid of extra fluid before bedtime.

Consider using a bedside commode, urinal, condom catheter, or continence pads, if you continue to wake up often to go to the toilet.