

Urology department

Bladder training: Frequently asked questions

What is bladder training?

Bladder training is a way of teaching your bladder how to hold more urine and cut back on the number of times you need to pass urine (frequency). It also helps to stop urine leaking when you experience urgency (the sudden, uncontrollable need to pass water).

It is used to treat an overactive or unstable bladder which is responsible for the symptoms you are experiencing. If you have this condition the bladder contracts before you are ready to go to the toilet and this can happen especially if you get into the habit of going "just in case", as the bladder learns to hold a small amount.

How do I do bladder training?

Instead of your bladder controlling you, you must learn how to control your bladder. When you feel the urge to pass water, tell yourself that you are not going to. Try to distract yourself for five to fifteen minutes from the time you get the first urge (use whatever method best distracts you). If you do this for a week, every time you want to pass water, you should find that by the end of the week the urge to urinate is delayed.

During the next week do the same thing and delay passing urine by a further five to fifteen minutes; by doing this your bladder will learn to hold more, and your symptoms will reduce.

Please be persistent and remember that your bladder is like any other muscle in the body and may require a few months training in order to reach its full potential.

Is there anything else I can do?

There are a number of things you can do to help the situation:

Some people find that cutting down on drinks that contain alcohol or caffeine reduce their symptoms:

- Try to drink between one and a half and two litres of fluid a day.
- Try not to become constipated.
- If leaking becomes a continuous problem then speak to your local continence specialist (Addenbrooke's continence advisor 01223 217465, community continence advisor 01353 652145)
- Ask your doctor if any medications may help you if bladder training fails.

Who can I contact for more help or information?

Oncology nurses

Uro-oncology nurse specialist

01223 586748

Bladder cancer nurse practitioner (haematuria, chemotherapy and BCG)

01223 274608

Prostate cancer nurse practitioner

01223 274608 or 216897 or bleep 154-548

Surgical care practitioner

01223 348590 or 256157 or bleep 154-351

Non-oncology nurses

Urology nurse practitioner (incontinence, urodynamics, catheter patients)

01223 274608 or 586748 or bleep 157-237

Urology nurse practitioner (stoma care)

01223 349800

Urology nurse practitioner (stone disease)

01223 349800 or bleep 152-879

Patient Advice and Liaison Centre (PALS)

Telephone:

+44 (0)1223 216756 or 257257

+44 (0)1223 274432 or 274431

PatientLine: *801 (from patient bedside telephones only)

E mail: pals@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Mail: PALS, Box No 53

Addenbrooke's Hospital

Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 2QQ

Chaplaincy and multi faith community

Telephone: +44 (0)1223 217769

E mail: chaplaincy@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Mail: The Chaplaincy, Box No 105

Addenbrooke's Hospital

Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 2QQ

MINICOM System ("type" system for the hard of hearing)

Telephone: +44 (0)1223 217589

Access office (travel, parking and security information)

Telephone: +44 (0)1223 596060



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For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

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