

HEALTHY BLADDER HABITS



MANAGE PRESSURE

Address causes of increased intra-abdominal pressure, such as:

- Constipation (see handout)
- Chronic cough (stop smoking, be compliant with prescribed inhalers, etc)
- Repetitive heavy lifting (learn proper mechanics and limit weight)

WAIT FOR AN URGE

Avoid "Just in Case" trips to the bathroom

- The bladder will not learn it's full capacity if it doesn't get to fill up
- Wait for an urge, then train your urge to improve bladder stability

TRAIN THE URGE

Instead of running to the restroom:

- Stop. Take a couple deep breaths to calm your nervous system.
- Sit, preferably with pressure to your perineum (such as on the edge or armrest of a couch).
- Perform about 5-6 small and light Kegels, "Quick Flicks."
- When the urge passes, slowly and calmly walk to the restroom

RELAXED EMPTYING

Sit tall (or stand tall) and fully relax the pelvic floor instead of "hovering"

- This will straighten the urethra and reduce pelvic floor muscle tension for improved bladder emptying

THE KNACK

"Squeeze before you sneeze."

- Practice using your pelvic floor muscles functionally.
- Maintain a contraction during any activity that increases the pressure on your bladder (bending, lifting, coughing, etc.)

AVOID BLADDER IRRITANTS

CAFFEINE

CARBONATION

SUGAR

ARTIFICIAL SWEETNER

ACIDIC FOODS

ALCOHOL

NICOTINE

SPICY FOOD

If you experience urinary urgency, consider limiting yourself to 0-1 bladder irritants per day.

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