

Bladder Retraining

The bladder has two functions:

1. It must store urine by relaxing and allowing urine to collect.
2. It must expel urine by contracting fully.

Normal bladder habits:

- Bladder can hold up to 2 cups
- Bladder emptying every 2-4 hours
- Voids per day: 5-7x (depending on waking hours)
- Voids per night: 0-1x

Common Definitions

1. Frequency of urination: An average voiding interval (time between going to the bathroom) of less than 2 hours.
2. Urgency: A strong urge to urinate associated with an outside event such as: exposure to cold, running water, walking by the bathroom, putting the key in the lock.
3. Urge Incontinence: Loss of urine associated with a strong urge to urinate. There are many reasons why the above conditions occur. Frequency is often a result of habits (going to the bathroom just in case). After many years of bad habits the bladder begins to signal a need to urinate before it has reached its full capacity. The bladder begins to rule the brain. If allowed, the bladder will signal the need to urinate at smaller and smaller amounts resulting in frequency of urination. This may progress to urge incontinence. Bladder Retraining will help you take control over your bladder. This technique involves increasing the time between urinating to train the bladder to hold more urine. It uses the same neurological pathways that you used when you were toilet trained many years ago. Some medical conditions may limit the effectiveness of this treatment, but almost all patients find they gain some benefit.

Method

1. Urinate no sooner than your prescribed interval of every _____ hours.
2. Urinate every _____ hours whether you need to go or not.
3. Bladder retraining stops while you are sleeping at night. Do not wake yourself up to maintain your bladder schedule.
4. If you feel a strong urge to urinate before the prescribed time try the following techniques: