

Improving your bladder control

There are other simple measures you can take to promote a healthy bladder and pelvic floor.

- To prevent or reduce urine leakage, squeeze the pelvic floor muscles tightly *at the same time* as you do any activity that usually causes urine leakage. This procedure is called *The Knack*
- Reduce the intake of caffeinated drinks such as tea, coffee, chocolate and fizzy drinks, as these can increase bladder and bowel symptoms
- Avoid constipation and straining
- Avoid heavy lifting
- Maintain a fluid intake of 1½ - 2 litres a day

- If overweight, aim to reduce your weight to an acceptable level for your height and build
- A persistent cough can make it more likely that you leak urine. It is very important that you always tighten your pelvic floor muscles during any coughing and also seek advice from your Doctor
- Smoking can make a cough worse and also increases the risk of cancers, including bladder cancer. If you would like help in stopping smoking, see your Doctor or Practice Nurse for advice
- If you see any blood in your urine, you should contact your Doctor or Practice Nurse for advice

The After-dribble

A very common and embarrassing problem is a small urine leak from the water pipe (urethra) after leaving the toilet.

This can result in a damp patch, especially noticeable on light coloured trousers.

This can be prevented by either tightening the pelvic floor muscles after fully emptying the bladder, or by placing your hand behind the scrotum and applying firm pressure upwards and slightly forward. Any urine left in the water pipe (urethra) will be expelled into the urinal or toilet.

Urine leakage or incontinence affects as many as 6 million people in the UK¹.

Seek further help if the advice given in this leaflet does not improve your symptoms.

¹ Continence Foundation 2000

You must always seek advice from your GP if you notice blood in your urine or if your symptoms worsen.

Further advice and help is available from:

- Your **GP**, who may also refer you to other Specialists for advice.
- The **Practice Nurse, District Nurse or Health Visitor** may be able to give further advice.
- A **Continence Specialist or Advisor** is an experienced Specialist Nurse, Physiotherapist or other Health Care Professional. There may be such a specialist in your area.
- A **Urologist** specialises in the branch of medicine dealing with the genitourinary system

The decision to refer you to the Urologist is usually made by your GP. In some areas, the Continence Specialist can make this referral.

Details of the services available in your area are available from your Health Trust, Clinic or Health Centre, or GP Practice.

There are many useful organisations which may be of further help and support, such as the Bladder and Bowel Foundation at

www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

Details of other organisations are available from your local Continence Service.



PAUL HARTMANN Ltd
Heywood Distribution Park
Pilsworth Road
Heywood
Lancashire OL10 2TT
Tel: 01706 363200
Fax: 01706 363201
www.hartmanndirect.co.uk

This leaflet has been developed by the HARTMANN Professional Development Group (NHS Continence Advisors), and Jeanette Haslam, Specialist Continence Physiotherapist (January 2009)

Literature due for review 2011



Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises for Men

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Continence Care

