

BLADDER TRAINING

What is bladder training?

Bladder training is needed to train your bladder to hold larger amounts of urine. This will help to then cut down the number of times you have to go to the toilet to pass urine.

How much can a bladder hold?

The bladder is a storage tank, which expands on filling, like a balloon. A normal bladder in a healthy adult can comfortably hold a pint (500 mls) of urine.

How often should urine be passed?

This depends on how much has been drunk and your bladder capacity. In general, the bladder should be emptied 3-4 hourly.

How can the bladder be retrained?

When you next feel as though you need to go to the toilet, don't go straight away. Hang on. Try to increase the time you hang on for, then eventually your bladder capacity will increase and the urge feeling will lessen. Try sitting down on a hard chair to relieve the feeling to pass urine. If you wait for the feeling to pass before rushing to the toilet you would be less likely to leak.

How can I help?

To help monitor your progress, you might find it helpful to record the times and amounts of urine passed. Gradually you should see the amount passed become larger and the amount of times you pass urine becomes less frequent. Be sensible and drink 8-10 cups of fluid a day. Have your last drink 2 hours before you go to bed. Your kidneys produce more urine if you drink tea, coffee and alcohol. Try changing to decaffeinated drinks or drink water instead. It is normal to get up once in the night but anymore than that will need careful monitoring of your evening fluid intake.

For bladder training to work you need to be determined and have lots of patience. Keep at it; you will see the results in 3-4 weeks. Do not be alarmed if your leakage worsens, this can happen at first until your bladder is retrained.

If you are taught bladder training after an operation you will be seen 6-8 weeks later to see how you are coping.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the staff in the Urodynamics department on 0151 702 4185 at the Liverpool Womens hospital.

Further information is available at the following websites:

www.continence-foundation.org.uk

www.wellbeing.org.uk

www.b-p-s-a.org.uk