

BLADDER RE-TRAINING PROGRAM

Voiding occurs by contraction of the bladder. Normally, the bladder does not contract until it is socially acceptable. The bladder sends signals to the brain that it wants to contract when it is full.

Subconsciously, the brain sends the message back to the bladder to wait until it is socially acceptable. After the bladder stretches more, the messages to the brain increase in intensity until the brain must *consciously* send messages back to the bladder to "hold it."

The goal of bladder training is to re-establish the brain's subconscious control over the bladder. If you carry out the instructions below with real determination, you will achieve a significant reduction in urgency and leakage.

FLUID RESTRICTION

1. Restrict fluids to 4-5 glasses a day (8 oz.)
2. No fluids after 7-8 PM

TIMED VOIDS

1. Begin a timed schedule of voiding. The goal is to void every 2-3 hours.
 - a. Start with an interval that is only minimally uncomfortable (e.g. 45 minutes).
 - b. Purchase a watch with a timer or use a simple portable kitchen timer and set it to the interval you have chosen.
 - c. Begin the day by voiding then setting the timer.
 - d. Throughout the day, void at the timed interval that is signaled by the timer and NOT in-between. You must attempt to void every time the timer goes off, even if you do not feel the urge.
 - e. Reset the timer after each void.
 - f. If you happen to leak a little in-between timed voids, that is okay. Do not get discouraged. This may happen a few times until your bladder is trained. Be vigilant at keeping the schedule of timed voids.
2. After 2-3 days on a schedule that is comfortable, increase the interval by 10-15 minutes. Repeat the above steps until comfortable at the new interval.
3. Continue increasing the interval until you can comfortably wait 2-3 hours between voids without leaking.

STRATEGIES FOR CONTROLLING THE URGE

1. Stop what you are doing and remain still. Sit down when possible or stand quietly.
2. Distract your mind. You may need to do a mind exercise like counting down from 100 by sevens (i.e. 100, 93, 86 . . .).
3. Squeeze the pelvic floor muscles (Kegel) in rapid succession, not relaxing enough to allow the bladder to contract in-between Kegels.
4. Do not move until the urge subsides (usually lasts only 1-15 seconds). Then, calmly return to what you were doing.

FLUID MANAGEMENT

Drink two 8 oz. cups of fluid with each meal and one in-between each meal, for a total of **eight** cups of fluid per day, unless you exercise and or are sweating.

Breakfast: 1 cup of water 1 cup other fluid (e.g. 1/2 cup of milk w/cereal & 1/2 cup of O.J.)	Lunch: 1 cup of water 1 cup other fluid	Dinner: 1 cup of water 1 cup other fluid
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- Nothing to drink after supper except 1 oz. of fluid to take medications.
- You may drink one cup of water between breakfast and lunch and one cup between lunch and dinner.
- No sipping or continuous drinking from a water bottle between meals.

POSSIBLE DIETARY IRRITANTS TO THE URINARY TRACT

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|---------------------------|---------------------|
| ➤ All alcoholic beverages | ➤ Honey |
| ➤ Apples | ➤ Lemon juice |
| ➤ Apple juice | ➤ Nutra-Sweet |
| ➤ Cantaloupe | ➤ Onions |
| ➤ Carbonated drinks | ➤ Peaches |
| ➤ Chilies / Spicy food | ➤ Pineapple |
| ➤ Citrus fruit / juices | ➤ Plums |
| ➤ Chocolate | ➤ Strawberries |
| ➤ Coffee | ➤ Tea |
| ➤ Cranberries | ➤ Tomatoes |
| ➤ Grapes | ➤ Vinegar |
| ➤ Guava | ➤ Vitamin B complex |

If bladder symptoms are related to dietary factors, strict adherence to a diet that eliminates the above food products should bring significant relief in about 10 days. After 10 days, you may begin to add the above foods back into your diet one by one. This way, if something does cause you symptoms, you will be able to identify what it is.

Most important is to begin by eliminating CAFFEINE from your diet.