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Special interest in Pelvic Function

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Bladder Training

The bladder can learn bad habits, often over a period of years. This means that the bladder starts to dictate when it should be emptied rather than allowing you to decide when it's convenient for you.

To regain control of your bladder it is necessary to 'train' it:

- Do not empty the bladder 'just in case'. If you need to go more often than every 2 hours try to wait a little longer, even a few minutes will help. This will help to stretch the bladder a little and encourage it to hold better volumes.
- When the urge to go to the toilet comes over you try to keep calm. Sit down, if possible, and try to hold a pelvic floor contraction (not as hard as you can, but hard enough to prevent leaking) for about 20 seconds, or as long as you are able. The desperate urge should pass. This either allows you to defer going for another minute or 2, or to get to the toilet without leaking on the way. Sometimes the urge passes completely and it may be a half hour before you get it again!
- Alternatively, 'clench' toes, as though about to launch oneself forwards. Do not flex them under, but push them straight into the ground. Think 'up and in'...
- Do not restrict your fluid intake; the less fluid, the stronger the urine, the more irritable the bladder becomes. Water is by far the best – aim for 30ml per kg, and adjust according to activity and sweating!
- Some bladders are sensitive to caffeine. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, cola and, horror of horrors – chocolate!!! Reducing your intake may prevent you going to the toilet so often. Bladders are also sensitive to alcohol.
- If you wake at night to empty your bladder, don't drink within two hours of going to bed.

Persevere – bladder training usually takes at least 6 weeks before it has a noticeable effect.