

Healthy bladder habits

Normal bladder habits

- Going to the toilet 4-6 times a day (or every 3-4 hours) and no more than once per night
- First desire to go when the bladder is holding approximately 200 – 250mls
- Having enough warning and time to find a toilet once the bladder feels full
- Completely emptying at each toilet visit, without straining or rushing
- No leakage
- No pain with either filling or emptying
- Maximum capacity of 400 – 550mls

You can help your bladder to behave normally by following these guidelines.

Healthy Bladder habits:

- Aim to drink between 1.5 – 2 litres of fluid per day – our bladders prefer this to be mainly water
- Minimise fluid intake in the 2-3 hours before bed
- Reduce irritant intake – caffeine, alcohol and artificial sweeteners can all irritate the bladder and cause urgency and leakage
 - Carbonated drinks, citrus juice and spicy foods can also do this to a lesser degree
- Listen to your bladder and go with a good urge, not ‘just in case’ – the bladder works best when it is allowed to fill and empty normally
- Take your time, don’t rush!
- If you have some after dribble milking the urethra with firm pressure behind the testicles milking any last drips into the urethra and finishing with a strong pelvic floor muscle contraction can help
- Always go to the toilet before just before bedtime
- Practice good bowel habits
 - Avoid constipation and straining which can irritate the bladder and weaken the pelvic floor
- Exercise and maintain healthy body weight
- Stop smoking – nicotine can irritate the bladder causing urgency; smoking is one of the leading causes of bladder cancer