Bladder Training
(sometimes called bladder drill)

An information guide
Bladder Training (sometimes called bladder drill)

Bladder training helps to cut down the number of times you have to go to the toilet (to pass urine) each day. It also helps you to stop urine leaking from your bladder when you really need to go to the toilet. These exercises are effective for both male and female bladder incontinence, or weakness of the pelvic floor.

Instead of your bladder controlling you, you must learn how to control your bladder. When you feel the urge to pass water, tell yourself that you are not going to.

Try these tips:
• stop still and cross your legs
• stand on your toes
• apply perineal pressure (the area between your anus and urethral opening) by sitting on something hard, e.g. the arm of the chair or a rolled up towel
• contract your pelvic floor muscles for 20 seconds. You can do this by tightening the muscles which stop you passing water and the muscles around your back passage
• wait until the urgency passes – 10 to 20 seconds. Don’t rush to the toilet
• distract your mind by thinking of something complex, e.g. saying the alphabet backwards, or counting backwards from 100 in 3s.

Aim to pass 300 mls (half a pint) when going to the toilet. This is usually achieved by drinking 1.5 – 2 litres of fluid per day or 6-8 glasses. For further information, please discuss this with a health professional.
Do not reduce fluids below 1.5 - 2 litres to stop yourself from leaking, as the urine simply becomes more concentrated, irritating the bladder and making you go to the toilet more often.

Your bladder will be stimulated more if you have caffeine, fizzy drinks and alcohol, so reduce these drinks and replace them with decaffeinated drinks or water.

Gradually increase the time between your visits to the toilet by 15-30 minutes, until you are going 6 or 7 times per day and no more than once per night.

If you get up in the night to empty your bladder, then do not drink after 8.30 p.m.

It is important to remember not to go to the toilet ‘just in case’ and to remember that you will have good days and bad days to start with, but don’t give up!

Useful websites
www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org
www.pogp.csp.org.uk

References
For further information on the references used in this leaflet please go to www.pat.nhs.uk.
If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Ethnic Health Team on 0161 627 8770

For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897

For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service

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