



Hounslow and Richmond
Community Healthcare



NHS Trust

Women's Health Service

Bladder Retraining

Information for patients

Providing exercises and strategies for improving bladder function.

Central Bookings Offices:

'O' Block Therapy Centre
West Middlesex University
Hospital, Twickenham
Road, Isleworth, TW7 6AF
Tel: 0300 555 0107

Teddington Memorial
Hospital, Hampton Road,
Teddington, TW11 OLJ
Tel: 020 87144019
Fax: 020 8714 4138

HRCH website: www.hrch.nhs.uk

This document can be provided in **different languages and formats**. For more information please contact:

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Email: pals.hrch@nhs.net

Freephone: 0800 953 0363

Bladder Retraining

Bladder Retraining is a **self-help process** by which patients suffering from symptoms of urinary urgency and/or frequency and/or urinary incontinence can learn to control their urge to urinate and/or control leakage in an attempt to improve their condition.

When patients experience urgency in the bladder, the normal impulse is to urgently find a toilet and pass urine.

Frequent visits to the toilet can lead to:

- ❑ A reduction in bladder control with more episodes of urinary leakages;
- ❑ A reduction in bladder capacity if the bladder muscle is not allowed to stretch adequately before emptying.

The **goal of Bladder Retraining is to** engage in a number of simple strategies to:

- ❑ Reduce your total number of daytime visits to the toilet to under 8 in 24 hours
- ❑ Increase the time between toilet visits to about 3 hourly
- ❑ Improve control of urgency
- ❑ Increase ability to defer visits to the toilet
- ❑ Improve your bladder ability to hold urine (between 250 to 500mls)
- ❑ Reduce the number of times you pass urine at night
- ❑ Reduce urinary leakage episodes
- ❑ Reduce your anxiety, improve your quality of life and confidence

Method of bladder retraining

1. Drink 3 pints (1500 ml) of fluid a day (remembering that milk in cereal/fruit/soup also counts towards this total). Try not to drink more than 2 caffeinated drinks and avoid fizzy drinks. You may need to reduce these drinks gradually.
2. When you have the urge to void, you are trying to hold off for 2 minutes, and gradually build up as the times goes on, with the aim of reaching 3 hourly voids.
3. To hold on , there are some tips/things that can help:
 - a. Stand still, or sit down on a hard chair
 - b. Cross your legs
 - c. Press upwards on your perineum
 - d. Gently contract your pelvic floor muscles for 10-20 seconds**
 - e. Distract yourself (count backwards from 100, recite a poem...)
 - f. Keep calm, don't panic**
4. The above tips can also be employed if you suffer from increased urgency when you approach your front door /hear a tap running.
5. If you get up at night to empty your bladder, avoid drinking after 7:30pm.

You will have good and bad days to start off with, but don't give up.

Double Voiding

This technique is a strategy to promote effective bladder emptying.

1. Sit on the toilet with your knees slightly apart. Sit for as long as possible.
2. Empty your bladder as fully as possible, wait 30 seconds and then:
 - Lean forward twice
 - Stand up, turn around and sit down again. If you don't want to turn around, try other activities such as combing your hair, washing your hands, looking at yourself in the mirror etc. This step can then be repeated.
3. Some women seem to empty their bladder better when they sit on the toilet in the reverse direction.
4. Sit for another 1-2 minutes if possible after you have finished your void.

ELinks:

The Bladder and Bowel Foundation is a charity providing information and education to both public and health professionals. A continence nurse helpline is available at the number below.

Bladder and Bowel Foundation

SATRA Innovation Park

Rockingham Road

Kettering

Northants NN16 9JH

Email: info@bladderandbowelfoundation.org

Helpline: 0845 345 0165

General Enquiries: 01536 533255

How are we doing?

We appreciate and encourage comments about any aspect of care or treatment.

Don't hesitate to speak to a member of staff or contact the
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) details
on the front page.

For a full list of **references** for this leaflet please contact
the **service** using details shown on the front page.

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