Bladder Retraining

Your bladder stores urine, urine is produced by the kidneys. Urine is produced all the time, this is dependent on what you eat and drink.

The bladder can hold around 400mls-600mls of urine and you should go to the toilet around 8 times in 24 hours, once at night is normal.

A healthy bladder should empty every 4-8 hours and pass a volume or around 500mls, and once at night. Your bladder should not leak urine.

The bladder fills slowly like a balloon and is able to stretch to store urine. The outlet for the urine the urethra is normally closed and is supported by your pelvic floor muscles.

In your bladder you have a muscle called the detrusor when this contracts the muscles in your urethra relax and the bladder empties.

Bladder retraining is designed to remind your bladder of normal function and reduce frequency of passing urine. This can take weeks to months to achieve.

What is an over active bladder?

If your bladder contracts without warning this can lead to the sudden urge to pass urine. This is called urinary urgency, which can cause you to need to pass little and often in small volumes. Your bladder can feel fuller than it is.

If you have large bladder contractions and have a weak pelvic floor this is called urge incontinence.

There is often no known cause for an over active bladder it can happen to people of all ages, genders and races. There may be other members of your family who have the same condition.

Stress can increase the urge to pass urine, and some patients with a neurological condition can notice an increased frequency but this is less common.

How is this diagnosed?

If appropriate the nurse may recommend urodynamic testing. This can show causes over incontinence, over activity urgency and difficulty in emptying your bladder. If you have over active bladder this is called detrusor over activity.

How to retrain the bladder

When you get the urge to pass urine try to delay going to the toilet for 5 minutes. You may feel the need to go just in case to prevent accidents, doing this can increased the bladders over activity as it does not allow the bladder to fill effectively. Your bladder can become more sensitive.

compassionate care

Retraining has to be completed slowly over time, try to extend the period of time you go to the toilet by a few minutes and increase the length of time weekly.

Start by delaying for 5 minutes for a week and extend the time by 5 minutes each week.
You should aim to go to the toilet every 3 -4 hours.
This can be extended slowly over time to reduce the frequency of going to the toilet.

How to supress the urgency

Counting in your head, completing a task can help to distract your mind and give you something else to focus on for example counting to 100 or read. Try to pre plan what method you are going to use.

Retraining your bladder will slowly increase the bladder capacity and reduce the frequency.

Keeping a bladder diary writing down how often you are going to the toilet for 3 days including fluid intake, can help to establish any pattern of going to the toilet and can be completed at regular intervals as a review and assessment tool.

Improving your pelvic floor strength will help to enable you to hold for longer periods. The nurse will discuss how to improve pelvic floor strength and can give you an individualised plan for improving this.

Going to the toilet just in case can teach your bladder to under fill and lead to increased frequency.

Reducing any bladder irritants from your diet can help in reducing the urge to go to the toilet. An example of these are caffeine, fizzy drinks, fresh fruit juice and spicy food can all irritate the lining of the bladder and make the urge to urinate more frequent.

Your nurse will give you an individualised training plan on how to train your bladder.

Medication

A medication may have also been suggested called an anticholinergic this medication allows your bladder to relax and fill more effectively and can help to reduce the urge to go to the toilet. The nurse will discuss this with you at clinic if this is appropriate for you.

Diuretics are designed to remove excess fluid from the bladder and they may make the problem worse by increasing the need to pass water. The nurse will discuss with you at the appointment if you take this type of medication.

Fluids

It is important to remain hydrated the average person needs around 2 litres of fluid per day, certain patients will have been advised to drink less due to other medical conditions.

Drinks which do not irritate your bladder are, milk, water, diluted juice/squash. Decaffeinated drinks can help reduce irritability but this is not the case for every patient.

Not all of these will be an irritant for your bladder, removing one from your diet for 2 weeks and reintroducing will help to distinguish which irritates your bladder.

Nicotine can also irritate the bladder and affect the bladder function.

Botox

Botox can be offered to patients who have tried medications and have had no improvement in their symptoms, Botox helps to reduce the bladder contractions and allow the bladder to fill. This is an invasive procedure that can be discussed with your nurse if this is appropriate for you.

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Bladder & Bowel Service
Ground Floor
Bowling Mill
Dean Clough
HX3 5WA

Telephone: 01484 343815

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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