

HOW CAN BLADDER PROBLEMS BE TACKLED?

If symptoms of frequency, urgency and/or leakage are being experienced, it is necessary to find out the cause. In order to do this, it is helpful to keep a record of how the bladder is working for three days.

How to keep a record

Each day, write down:

- How many drinks and what they are.
- How many times urine is passed. If possible, note the time as well.
- Measure and record the amount of urine passed at each visit to the toilet. This is easily done by using a measuring jug.
- How often leakage occurs.
- If wearing a protective pad or pant, when this has been changed.

Understanding the record and tackling the problem

- Have you had 6 - 8 drinks at regular intervals throughout the day? If not, adjust the amount you drink accordingly, remember to avoid caffeine and pure citrus juices.
- Has urine been passed more than 6 - 8 times per day? (If so bladder retraining may be required). Note the largest amount passed. Your aim should be to pass about this amount of urine on each visit to the toilet, avoiding frequent visits to pass small amounts.
- If leakage occurs, bladder retraining combined with pelvic floor exercises will help.

CLINICS HELD AROUND THE COUNTY

Donnington Health Centre, Oxford
First Monday of the month

Townlands Hospital, Henley on Thames
First Wednesday of the month

Bicester Community Hospital, Bicester
Second Tuesday of the month

Witney Community Hospital, Witney
Second Wednesday of the month

Orchard Health Centre, Banbury
Third Friday of the month

Didcot Community Hospital, Didcot
Fourth Friday of the month

We cannot provide or prescribe products for the management of incontinence from the Clinic. These must be purchased privately or obtained via the District Nurse.

All appointments are organised by the Oxfordshire Continence Advisory Service, Witney Community Hospital, Witney.

Tel: 01993 209434



*A quality service providing and promoting
a realistic approach to continence
for professionals, patients and
carers within Oxfordshire.*

We offer a quality service by providing a realistic approach to continence for professionals, patients and carers within Oxfordshire.

People who have a continence problem can contact us directly for advice. Help can also be obtained from GP's or Practice Nurses. For those who are house bound and can not attend a clinic the service is provided by their local district nursing team who can be contacted at the persons GP practice

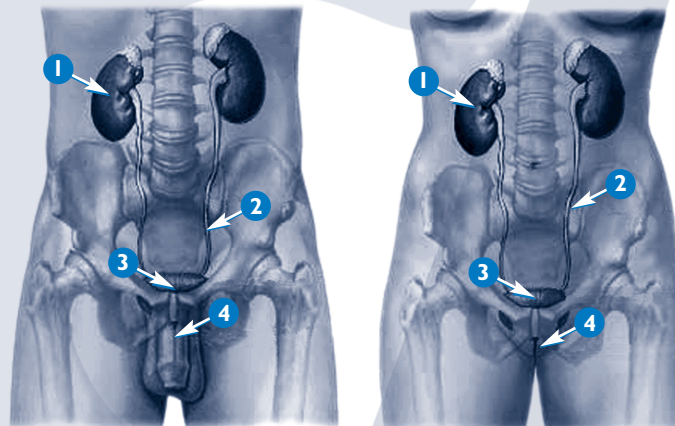
People referred to the Oxfordshire Continence Advisory Service will be seen in a clinic, which offers the following: -

- assessment of urinary and faecal incontinence
- information, education and support
- treatment on a monthly basis in the form of pelvic floor exercises and bladder re-training
- assessment of residual urine
- vaginal examination and assessment of pelvic floor
- "dipstix" urinalysis
- review and advice regarding medication

Relevant onward referral will be made directly from the clinic.

Patients referred to a clinic must be willing and able to attend, motivated to comply with the exercise regimes and capable to completing a frequency volume chart.

Urine is produced continuously, day and night, by the kidneys. It contains waste products from the body and a steady trickle passes down the ureters. These lead from the kidneys to the bladder. The bladder acts as a storage tank which expands on filling rather like a balloon. Messages are sent along the nerves to the brain as the bladder fills. When there is about half to three quarters of a pint of urine (250 - 400mls) stored, a strong desire to pass urine is felt. Most people will pass urine 3 - 4 hourly during waking hours and perhaps once per night.



MALE

FEMALE

- 1 - KIDNEY 2 - URETER 3 - URINARY BLADDER
4 - URETHRA

What is frequency?

Frequency occurs when the bladder can only hold a small amount of urine and needs to be emptied often.

What is urgency?

Urgency arises when the bladder needs to be emptied in a great hurry.

What is leakage?

Leakage is the loss of urine, which can occur before or after a visit to the toilet or on exertion.

- Urinary tract infections may cause frequency and urgency and should be excluded as a cause.
- Some beverages are bladder irritants and can make the kidneys produce more urine giving rise to a frequency problem, eg tea, coffee, cola, cocoa, drinking chocolate and fresh orange and grapefruit juice.
- Alcoholic drinks have a similar effect.
- Not drinking enough fluids. Try to have about 8 drinks per day.
- The bladder is very sensitive to our emotional state and frequency and urgency commonly occur when we are anxious or depressed.
- Constipation can also be a cause of urgency or frequency because a distended bowel can press on the bladder and irritate it.
- Frequent emptying of the bladder can become a habit, some people think that an opportunity to pass urine should never be missed. This prevents the bladder from filling completely and may result in a small bladder capacity.

Some women may experience symptoms of frequency, urgency and leakage prior to menstruation, or following the menopause.