



Healthy Bladder Habits

Keeping a bladder diary can help
to be more aware of your bladder habits.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I DRINK?

- You need **1 ½ to 2 liters** of fluid every day. This includes all fluids you drink, even soup.
- If you have been exercising and sweating, have an extra cup of water to replace the fluid you have lost.
- **Limit** the amount of coffee, tea and alcohol you drink. These drinks have a diuretic effect and will tend to “go right through you,” causing you to lose fluids rapidly.

WHAT SHOULD I DRINK?

- If you have a problem controlling urinary urgency then avoid drinks that irritate the bladder, such as coffee, alcohol, caffeinated pop, carbonated drinks and strong tea. See the handout, “**Bladder Irritants**” for a complete list of foods and drinks that cause urinary urgency. Reducing your intake of these fluids will help you to control urgency.
- **Water is the best drink.** It will not irritate your bladder. Try to drink water instead of other drinks.

WHEN SHOULD I DRINK?

- **Spread your fluids** throughout the day and **sip your fluids**, don’t gulp down a whole glass at once.
- If you are going out, then take a water bottle with you and sip on it throughout the day. Refill when empty.
- Always have a drink with your meals.
- Drinking after supper might get you up during the night and interrupt your sleep. If this is a problem, then **limit**

your evening fluids and especially any caffeinated beverages.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I USE THE TOILET?

- In the daytime: emptying your bladder every **2 to 4 hours** is considered normal. At night: it is normal to get up **once**, or if you are over 60 years, **twice**.
- If you are using the toilet more frequently during the day or night, then speak to a healthcare professional who can help you to regain control.

Bladder Irritants

Some foods and beverages are known to irritate your bladder. By eliminating or reducing the amount of bladder irritants you drink or eat, you could improve your bladder urgency and the number of times you go to the toilet.

STRONG BLADDER IRRITANTS:

- **Caffeine** is both a diuretic and bladder irritant. Tea and coffee are equally irritating. After a caffeinated drink, you will produce more urine than the amount of fluid you drank and it will give you a strong urge to go to the toilet. A strong urge might be difficult to control. Some people are also sensitive to decaf coffee or tea.
- Caffeine can also be in medications- check labels on over-the-counter medications and as well as with your pharmacist.

- **Carbonated beverages-** Bubbly drinks, especially diet pop, are particularly irritating. Anything carbonated.
- **Alcohol** is also a diuretic and bladder irritant

THE FOLLOWING MIGHT IRRITATE YOUR BLADDER:

- **Certain acidic fruits:**
 - oranges, grapefruits, lemons and limes, strawberries, grapes, peaches, pineapple and fruit juices
 - cranberry juice (more than 1 cup a day)
 - tomato-based products
- **Spicy foods**, with hot chili peppers
- **Chocolate**
- **Vinegar in large quantity**
- **Corn syrup**
- **Cigarettes and all tobacco products**
- **Vitamins C and B. Try buffered vitamin C & B**
- **Artificial sweeteners eg Aspartame (Equal, Nutrasweet) and Splenda,**

Why these items sometimes cause irritation isn't exactly understood, and what causes bladder irritation may vary from person to person.

*Most people are **not** sensitive to **ALL** of these products your goal is to find the foods that make **YOUR** symptoms worse