



# Continence Clinic

## How to Control Urinary Urgency

**Every time you feel the urge to urinate, stop immediately and get control. Settle every urge before walking to the bathroom. The following tips will help you to settle the urge**

- If you are **walking: stop moving!!**
- If you are **standing: sit** if possible.
- **Tighten up your pelvic floor muscles** (if indicated). You can also do a few mini pumps with your muscles. Repeat 2 to 6 times and then hold again, depending on the strength of the urge. Visualize how your muscles are clamping around your urethra, the tube leading from the bladder.
- **Use positive self-talk.** Tell your bladder to “Stop it!” Tell it to calm down. Tell yourself “**I will not leak!**” **Believe** you can get control! Remember **YOU** are the boss, not your bladder.
- **Stay calm.** Breathe. Tell yourself “I will not let a drop out. **I am in control.**”
- **Distraction** improves control.
- Try **rubbing the back of your thighs** a few times, **curling your toes or rising up on the balls of your feet** to calm your bladder. These will have a calming effect and help settle the urge.
- At home **press your hand** against the area where the urine comes out. This calms your bladder and reduces urgency.



## **BE AWARE OF TRIGGERS THAT MAY CAUSE A STRONG URGE:**

- “Key in the door”- as you arrive home
- Running water
- Seeing the toilet
- Freezer aisle of the supermarket
- Cold, wet weather

To settle these, tighten up your pelvic floor muscles- do a few short hold’ems, talk to your bladder, **don’t move**, wait for the urge to pass before moving. It will!

\*\* With “**key in the door**” problem, empty your bladder before going home. When you get home, settle the urge using urge control techniques. Then do a few things around the house like turning on the kettle, or your computer, check phone messages etc...

**Do not go immediately to the bathroom. You are trying to break the habit of coming home and running to the bathroom.**



# Tips to Reduce Urinary Urgency

**Bladder irritants:** Avoid or reduce foods/drinks that irritate your bladder.

- **Constipation:** Avoid it.
- **Strengthen your pelvic floor muscles.** They will hold the urine better and they will calm your bladder more effectively.
- **Fluids: Don't restrict** them. Drink at least 5 cups of fluid per day. **Water** is best. **Spread** your fluids through the day, and **limit fluids in the evening.** Don't drink too much fluid!
- **Use the toilet at regular intervals** in the daytime. Ideally you want to urinate every 2-4 hours. Don't wait longer. If you urinate more often, ask yourself, "Could I wait 5 minutes longer?" Try to delay urinating just for a few minutes, if you can.
- See your family doctor and get your **urine checked** if urgency is a problem. You want to make sure you don't have an infection.
- See your family doctor if there is **blood** in your urine.