

Bladder Health

What Is Considered Normal?

- The bladder's job is to fill with urine, store it, and then empty on a regular basis.
- The normal range of voiding urine is 6 to 8 times during a 24-hour period. As we get older, we may need to pass urine more frequently but usually not more than every 2 hours.
- The average bladder can hold about 2 cups of urine before it needs to be emptied.
- Urine should flow easily without discomfort in a good, steady stream until the bladder is fully or almost completely empty.
- No pushing or straining is necessary to empty the bladder.
- An "urge" is a signal that you feel as the bladder stretches to fill with urine. Urges can be felt even if the bladder is not full. Urges are NOT commands to go to the toilet. An urge is merely a signal and can be controlled.

What Are Good Bladder Habits?

- Take your time when emptying your bladder. Don't strain or push to empty your bladder.
- Allow your bladder to empty completely each time urinate. Do not rush the process or stop before emptying is finished. (Note- It is normal for many people to have some urine left in the bladder after urination)
- Try not to ignore your bladder. Do not wait for more than 4 hours between toileting during the day.
- Try not to urinate too frequently. Avoid going to the toilet more often than every 2 hours and avoid going "just in case". Try to go only when your bladder is full.
- It is usually not necessary to go when you feel the first urge to urinate. Urgency and frequency of urination can be improved by retraining the bladder and spacing your fluid intake throughout the day.
- After urinating, women should wipe from front to back then drop the tissue in the toilet to decrease chance of getting a urinary tract infection.
- Maintain good bladder habits, and don't let your bladder control your life!

Tips to Maintain A Healthy Bladder

- Stay hydrated and maintain a good fluid intake starting early in the day. Depending on your body size and environment, drink 4-8 cups (8 oz each) of fluid per day unless otherwise advised by your doctor. Half of the fluids that you drink should be water or water-like. Not drinking enough fluid concentrates urine making it more irritating and may create a foul odor and dark color of the urine.
- Limit the amount of caffeine (coffee, cola, chocolate, or tea) and citrus fruit juices and fruits that you consume as these drinks and foods can irritate the bladder and be associated with increased sensation of urinary urgency and frequency.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. Alcohol increases urine production and also makes it difficult for the brain to coordinate bladder control.
- Stop drinking 2-3 hours before going to sleep to decrease the chance that bladder urges will wake you up and disrupt your sleep.
- Avoid constipation by maintaining a balanced diet of dietary fiber, drinking enough water, and getting regular cardiovascular exercise.

Bladder and Bowel Log

Name: _____ Day: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Time of Day	Type & Amount of Fluid and Food Intake (please report fluids in ounces)	Amount Urine Voided * (oz, S/M/L)	Bowel Movement **Type 1-7	Amount of Leakage (S/M/L)	Was Urge** present (1/2/3)	Activity with Leakage or change Pad or other symptoms
12 am						
1 am						
2 am						
3 am						
4 am						
5 am						
6 am						
7 am						
8 am						
9 am						
10 am						
11 am						
Noon						
1 pm						
2 pm						
3 pm						
4 pm						
5 pm						
6 pm						
7 pm						
8 pm						
9 pm						
10 pm						
11 pm						
Totals	Water: Other fluids:	#voids	# BMs	# leaks		# pads

KEY:* Amount Voided: can be measured in oz. (ounces), or estimated as *S/M/L = Small/ Medium/ Large,
 **Bristol Stool Chart Type 1 = hard separate lumps , Type 4= smooth sausage-like, Type 7= watery
 ***Urge Rating: 1= mild, 2= moderate, 3 = severe

Patient name _____

Day _____

Date: : / / _____

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5 pm						
6 pm						
7 pm						
8 pm						
9 pm						
10 pm						
11 pm						
Totals	Water: Other fluids:	# voids	# BMs	# leaks		# pads

Comments/ Questions: _____

Healthy Bladder Habits

1. “The bladder likes water!” DO drink water and fluids all throughout the day. If you reduce your liquid intake, the smaller amount of urine will become more concentrated, causing irritation of the bladder lining. Highly concentrated urine causes increased frequency of urination and can lead to growth of bacteria, causing infection. Restricting fluids may lead to dehydration. Restricting fluids early in the day can lead to increased thirst later in the day, and they having to wake at night to urinate.



2. Water is the best beverage to drink to promote a healthy bladder. At least half of your fluid intake should be water. You should **gradually** increase your water intake to six to eight, 8-ounce glasses of water per day. You can drink water with other beverages to reduce their concentration and decrease their adverse effect on the bladder.
3. Several foods and beverages are thought to irritate the bladder and contribute to leakage, especially coffee, tea, citrus and cranberry juices, milk, dark colas, chocolate, alcohol, tomatoes, sugar and honey, artificial sweeteners.
4. Constipation may contribute to bladder problems. When the rectum is full of stool, it may disturb the bladder and cause the sensation of frequency and urgency, and lead to urine leakage. If you must bear down or strain to pass your stool, this can cause weakening of the pelvic floor, which may contribute to bladder leakage. If you have regular constipation, increasing your water and fiber intake may help to relieve this problem. Speak to your doctor about any issues with constipation.
5. After urination, women should wipe from front to back, then drop the tissue in the toilet. If more wiping is needed, use more tissue. Women should also avoid perfumed or colored toilet tissue and sanitary napkins because the dyes and perfumes may irritate the skin, and the bladder. Women should consider avoiding wearing nylon underpants and pantyhose next to their body. Cotton underwear is non-irritating.
6. Some foods (especially asparagus) cause urine to smell bad. Some medicine, even when taken for other health conditions, may cause urine to smell bad or turn an unusual color. Ask your pharmacist if you suspect medication is causing this. Infection also causes urine to smell bad. If your urine smells bad and you don't think it is from anything you ate, then consult with your physician right away to rule out an infection. Cranberry and cherry juice may help to decrease urine odor.
7. Cigarette smoking is irritating to the bladder surface. Coughing puts pressure on the pelvic floor muscles and may contribute to weakness and thus bladder leakage.

Keeping a Record of Bladder and Bowel Function

- The purpose of a voiding log is to document how your bowel and bladder function. A log can give your health care provider an excellent picture of your bowel and bladder function, habits and patterns. At first the log is used as an evaluation tool. Later it will be used to measure progress on your bowel and bladder retraining or leakage episodes.
- Please complete a voiding log every day for 4 days and bring it with you to your appointment.
- Your log will be more accurate if you fill it out as you go through the day. It can be very difficult to remember at the end of the day exactly what happened in the morning.

Instructions

Column 1- Time of Day

The log begins with midnight and covers a 24 hour period. Correspond events recorded in the other columns to the correct hour during the day that the event occurred.

Column 2- Type and Amount of Fluid and Food Intake

Record an approximate amount of the foods and fluids that you ingest during the day.
Record when you wake up and when you go to sleep.

Column 3- Amount voided Record the amount voided using the most convenient method

1. Place an S, M or L in the box at the corresponding time each time you urinate.
S= Small amount; urinating "just in case"
M=Medium amount; as if an 8 ounce cup would run over, or an average bowel movement
L=Large amount; about the amount that you would urinate when you first wake up in the morning, your typical largest BM
2. You can record the total number of seconds that urination lasts. Count "1- one thousand, 2- one thousand..." up to the time it takes to finish completely voiding your bladder.
3. Measure the amount of urine you void in millilitres (mL) or ounces (oz)

Column 4- Amount of Leakage Record the amount of urine or stool loss at the time that it occurred

S= Small; drop or two of urine, small pellet or smear of stool
M= Medium; enough to wet your underwear, more stool than a tablespoon
L= Large; enough to wet outerwear or floor, more than 3 tablespoons of stool

Column 5- Presence of Urge Rate the level of the urge you experience before you have a BM or before you urinate, and any urge with leakage and voiding

1= Small amount of urge
2= Medium amount of urge
3= Large amount of urge

Column 6- Activity with leakage OR did you Change a Pad?

Record activity that you were doing when you leaked urine.
Also record when you change your pad

Bottom Row: tally up the number of voids , leaks and pads