



## Your important health information

# Good bladder habits

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### What is normal bladder function?

- It is normal to pass 250-500ml of urine each time you empty your bladder. This may vary with age, pregnancy and with specific medical conditions that affect the urinary system.
- It is normal to empty the bladder 6 to 8 times in a 24 hour period (including not more than once overnight).
- It is normal to need to empty the bladder every three to four hours during the day.

When the bladder is working well:

- you will need to go to the toilet when the bladder is full
- you will make it to the toilet without rushing or leaking urine
- you will be able to defer (put off) going to the toilet to empty the bladder if it is not a convenient time for you.

### What can you do to keep your bladder 'healthy'?

- Drink well:
  - For adults **two** litres of fluid every day is encouraged, mostly water
  - Be aware that the recommended fluid intake may vary with weather, exercise and other health conditions
  - Aim to drink gradually and consistently over the day and avoid drinking large volumes in the evening and overnight.
- Avoid bladder irritants:
  - Some drinks may irritate the bladder and may make you go to the toilet more often or more urgently such as coffee, tea, chocolate or cola drinks, alcoholic beverages and soft or artificially sweetened drinks
  - Aim for no more than two of these drinks per day and avoid them in the late afternoon and evening.
- Avoid going 'just in case':
  - Go to the toilet only when your bladder is full and you need to go.
- Practise good toileting habits:
  - Do not hover over the toilet seat
  - Take your time to empty your bladder – ensure that you do not rush if you have not completely emptied
  - If you feel your bladder is not empty after voiding, stand up, sit back down again, lean forward and have a second attempt
  - Do not strain to empty, instead try rocking the pelvis backwards and forwards as shown by your physiotherapist if this is a problem for you.

- Adopt a good toileting position (see diagram):
  - Lean forward with a straight back
  - Rest your arms on your thighs
  - Place a footstool under your feet so that your knees are higher than your hips
  - To empty, relax your stomach muscles (abdominals) and bulge your tummy out.



**Additional Information:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Further Information**

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact:

**Mercy Hospital for Women**  
Physiotherapy Department  
Phone: 03 8458 4141

**Werribee Mercy Hospital**  
Physiotherapy Department  
Phone: 03 8754 3150

**Mercy Health Albury**  
Community Therapy Unit  
Phone: 02 6042 1439

**Acknowledgements**

Produced by: Physiotherapy Department MHW

Date produced: July 2014

Date of last review: July 2021

Date for review: July 2023