

Your important take home information

Difficulties passing urine after having a baby

Following the birth of your baby, you may have difficulty passing urine.

Some of the symptoms you may notice include:

- decreased or no feeling to empty your bladder
- difficulty starting the flow of or passing urine
- slow or stop-start flow of urine
- leakage of urine
- feeling that your bladder is not empty after going to the toilet.

The following strategies may help to improve your symptoms:

- **Adopt good bladder habits:**
 - drink plenty of fluids – 1.5 to 2 litres of fluid (mostly water) sipped consistently throughout the day
 - take your time to empty your bladder – ensure that you do not rush if you have not completely emptied
 - do not push or strain when emptying your bladder.
- **Adopt healthy bowel habits and avoid constipation:**
 - eat a high fibre diet (fruit, vegetables, wholemeal grains and cereals)
 - support the area between your vagina and anus with your hand when emptying
 - avoid straining to empty
 - your medical team/midwife/physiotherapist may discuss the use of medication to improve stool consistency.
- **Adopt a good toileting position when emptying your bladder/bowels:**
 - 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.
- **Use pain control:**
 - take pain relief medication regularly as prescribed by your doctor
 - please refer to the Postnatal Physiotherapy Care booklet for more information on how to improve recovery following delivery.



Some women require additional strategies to help with bladder emptying.

Your physiotherapist will advise you on which of the below strategies is appropriate for your situation:

- Timed voiding:** (if you have a reduced feeling to empty your bladder)
 - Ensure you go to the toilet every two to three hours
 - It can be helpful to set an alarm to remind you
 - Continue with timed voiding until your feeling to empty your bladder returns to normal or you are advised to stop timed voiding by your physiotherapist.

- Starting the flow of urine:** (if you are experiencing difficulty starting the flow of urine)
 - Go for a short walk around the ward before attempting to empty your bladder
 - Turn on the tap and leave it running
 - Gently tap or massage over your bladder.
 - If the midwives are not measuring the amount of urine you are passing, try to pass urine in the shower, or pour warm water over the perineum.

- Emptying the bladder fully:** (if you feel as though you have not completely emptied)
 - After passing urine wait for a minute and then try to pass more.
 - While you wait try rocking your pelvis back and forth on the toilet seat, or stand up and sit back down.

Please present to the Emergency Department if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- unable to pass urine
- severe lower abdominal pain
- swollen lower abdomen.

Mercy Hospital for Women Emergency Department

Phone: 8458 4001

Werribee Mercy Hospital Emergency Department

Phone: 8754 3000

A physiotherapist will contact you by phone approximately two weeks after the birth of your baby to see if you are still having difficulty emptying your bladder.

Further Information

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

MHW Physiotherapy Department

Phone: 03 8458 4141

WMH Physiotherapy Department

Phone: 03 8754 3150

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MHVL

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