

Urinary Incontinence

Urinary incontinence is the loss of bladder control. A person may not be able to hold their urine. Urinary incontinence affects many people.

If you have any questions,
please ask your physician.

Some people feel embarrassed to talk about their symptoms with their physician. We encourage you to discuss your concerns with a member of your care team. They may often be able to find the cause and discuss treatment options with you. Your physician may also refer you to a urogynecologist, a physician who specializes in urinary incontinence.


Types of urinary incontinence

There are different types of urinary incontinence. Your care team will work with you to find the cause. This will allow them to create treatment options that work for you.

Stress urinary incontinence – This happens when pressure on the bladder overwhelms the muscle that keeps the urethra (tube that allows urine to pass out of the body) closed. This can cause a person to leak urine when they cough, laugh, sneeze, lift heavy objects or exercise. It is the most common type of urinary incontinence.

Urge urinary incontinence – This happens when the bladder muscle suddenly contracts (becomes smaller). This can cause urine to leak when a person has a sudden urge to urinate. Many people may be unable to make it to the bathroom before they leak.

Mixed incontinence – This is a combination of stress and urge urinary incontinence.



Overflow incontinence – This happens when the body makes more urine than the bladder can hold. It can cause urine to leak.

Functional incontinence – This may happen if a person cannot get to a bathroom in time due to physical limits, such as arthritis, causing urine to leak.

Causes

There are many reasons people may have these symptoms. Some people have symptoms when they are young, others after childbirth and some in older age. Changes in the pelvic floor muscles, hormones or other health issues can lead to these symptoms. Sometimes, other conditions like diabetes or neurological problems are the cause.

Evaluation

Your physician will talk with you to help find the type of incontinence you have. They will also do a physical exam. They may need to do urine or blood tests to find your condition.

Treatment

There are many treatments for urinary incontinence. Options include lifestyle changes, physical therapy and medical treatment. There are also devices, procedures and minimally invasive surgical options that can work well. Your physician will help find the right option for you.

If you have any questions, please talk with your physician or a member of your care team.

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