

How to Retrain Your Bladder

What to eat and what to avoid

This handout gives tips on how to retrain your bladder.

Why should I retrain my bladder?

You may want to retrain your bladder if you need to urinate too often. Bladder retraining will slowly increase the size of your bladder and teach it to hold more urine. This means you will not need to urinate as often.

During this retraining, it is important not to irritate your bladder. To do this, you will need to:

- **Drink more water so that your urine is dilute (weak).**
Dilute urine has a lower level of waste products. Strong urine can irritate your bladder. This can make you feel like you need to urinate, even if there is very little urine in your bladder.
- **Avoid foods and drinks that irritate your bladder.**

To track your progress during bladder retraining, we will ask you to keep a “bladder diary.”

What do I need to do?

Change Your Diet

Stop eating foods and drinking fluids that irritate your bladder. These include:

- Coffee, tea, carbonated drinks, acidic juices, and alcohol
- Chocolate, tomatoes, and acidic fruits

To learn more about what foods to avoid, see our handout “Foods that Irritate Your Bladder.”



We will ask you to keep a “bladder diary” to track your progress as you retrain your bladder.

Drink More Water

Start drinking at least 4 cups of water each day. Slowly add more, until you are drinking 8 cups each day.

At first, you will need to urinate more. Over time, your bladder will learn how to hold the extra fluid.

Wait 5 Minutes

When you feel the urge to urinate, try to wait 5 minutes before you go to the bathroom. Each week during retraining, add 5 more minutes to your wait time before you go to the bathroom. This means you will wait 10 minutes during week 2, 15 minutes during week 3, and so on.

What to Expect

The goal of bladder retraining is for you to be able to:

- Hold 10 to 13 ounces of urine in your bladder
- Urinate only every 2 to 4 hours during the day

You should see improvement within 2 to 3 months after you start retraining your bladder.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

UWMC - Montlake Urology

Clinic: Call 206.598.4294

weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

All other times, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Urology doctor on call.

Women's Health Care Center:

Call 206.598.5500:

- Tuesdays, 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

- Other weekdays, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

All other times, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Urology doctor on call.

UWMC - Northwest Pelvic

Health Center: Call 206.668.4477

weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

All other times, call 206.668.4477 and ask to page your provider.