Urinary incontinence is loss of bladder control. It can happen at any age to men or women. However, it is more common in older adults and women.

**SHORT-TERM causes include:**
- Urinary tract infection
- Vaginal infection or irritation in women
- Constipation
- Some medicines

**LONG-TERM Causes include:**
- Weak or overactive bladder muscles
- Damage to bladder nerves from diseases like multiple sclerosis or Parkinson’s
- Diseases like arthritis that make it difficult to get to a bathroom in time
- Blockage from an enlarged prostate in men

Know if you have urinary incontinence.

If you can answer “YES” to any of these questions, you may have urinary incontinence:

- DO YOU leak urine when you cough, sneeze, laugh or exercise?
- DO YOU wake up more than twice during the night to go to the bathroom?
- DO YOU leak urine on the way to the bathroom?
- DO YOU have anxiety about knowing where bathrooms are when you are not at home?

Incontinence can be treated and often cured. Even if treatment is not fully successful, careful management can help you feel more relaxed and confident.

**DO YOU leak urine when you cough, sneeze, laugh or exercise?**

**DO YOU wake up more than twice during the night to go to the bathroom?**

**DO YOU leak urine on the way to the bathroom?**

**DO YOU have anxiety about knowing where bathrooms are when you are not at home?**

**Know what you can do.**

Talk with your doctor about your options, including:

**PELVIC MUSCLE REHABILITATION (PMR)**

- Pelvic muscle rehabilitation techniques to strengthen the muscles of the pelvic floor. PMR can help retrain the bladder to function within its normal capacity.

**MEDICATIONS**

- There are some effective medications available for people with overactive bladder and incontinence.

**SURGERY**

- In some cases, incontinence doesn’t respond to conservative treatment. When urinary incontinence markedly disrupts your life, surgery may be an option.

**DIET AND FLUID INTAKE**

- Know what you eat and drink can influence your bladder habits. Caffeine and alcohol are both diuretics, which increases urine production. Certain acidic foods can irritate your bladder and contribute to urine leakage.

**BLADDER RETRAINING**

- With an overactive bladder, you can become accustomed to urinating often at the slightest urge. Scheduling your urination and gradually increasing the time between urination, allow your bladder to fill more fully and give you more control.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012.

This information does not substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis or treatment of your physician. Always talk to your physician or a qualified health care provider about any questions you may have regarding your medical condition.

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