

HOW CAN I STOP URINARY INCONTINENCE?

Urinary incontinence is defined as any involuntary loss of urine that occurs when you are not deliberately peeing. Common types are **stress urinary incontinence** and **urge urinary incontinence**. To control leakage, first practice kegels to build pelvic floor muscle strength:

PRACTICING KEGELS

Breathe in and relax your pelvic floor. Breathe out or count out loud to 10 while you tighten as if holding in a bowel movement. Relax completely between each kegel. Practice 10-15 at a time, 1-2 sets per session, 1-2 times per day. A good goal is ~50 each day. *Does this sound different than what you have practiced before? We recommend this technique for many reasons. If you have questions, ask your provider for more information about kegels.*

STRESS URINARY INCONTINENCE

Stress Urinary Incontinence is leakage that happens with impact: coughing, sneezing, lifting and jumping. **How can I control stress incontinence?**

- Kegel and hold BEFORE you cough or sneeze
- Get in the habit: kegel and hold BEFORE you blow your nose or clear your throat.
- Kegel and hold BEFORE you lift and jump
- Limit high-impact activities
- Learn to engage your pelvic floor and deep abdominals before you exert
- Talk to your provider about using a pessary when you exercise

URGE URINARY INCONTINENCE

Urge Urinary Incontinence happens when you have to pee and start walking to the bathroom, but leak before you get there. **How can I control urge incontinence?**

- AVOID peeing “just in case.” Wait until you have a mild urge to empty. If you pee too often, the bladder shrinks. Every 2-4 hours is normal.
- Stay hydrated! Restricting fluid intake makes urine concentrated and irritating.
- Limit “bladder irritants:” caffeine, alcohol, artificial sweeteners...water is best.
- So what can I do when I feel the urge?
 - Sit down or cross your legs
 - Practice 5-10 kegels, until the urge fades
 - Then stand up and CALMLY walk to the bathroom. If the urge comes back before you reach the bathroom, stop and repeat.

If you are practicing and your symptoms are not getting better, contact your doctor and go see a pelvic floor physical therapist.