

Pelvic health physiotherapy

Bladder emptying

Tips to help you fully empty your bladder

Introduction

This leaflet provides information and advice about bladder emptying. It is important that your bladder has emptied properly each time you pass urine to prevent against urinary tract infection (UTI), bladder and kidney problems secondary to retention, and urinary incontinence.

Preventing urinary retention:

- don't rush! When going for a wee, give yourself time
- never stop / start the flow of urine
- do not squat or hover over the toilet to pass urine, sit down fully
- always wait until the flow of urine has stopped
- avoid straining to pass urine or to open the bowels
- avoid constipation by eating a healthy diet including at least 30g of fibre, and at least 1.5L fluids every day
- do not complete your pelvic floor exercises on the toilet.

Positioning

Your position can affect how well your bladder empties:

- sit down fully and comfortably on the toilet
- do some deep breathing to relax the pelvic floor muscles if you need to
- if you feel unfinished or the urine is trapped after passing urine, then stand up, rock backward and forwards, wiggle your hips, sit down and gently try to pass urine again

Physical prompts to help empty your bladder:

- gently tap or apply pressure to your pubic bone
- squeeze and then let go of your pelvic floor muscles to make sure you have fully relaxed them. Only do this BEFORE you start passing urine, never during the flow.
- pour a jug/cup of warm water over your pubic area to stimulate the flow of urine
- gently pull your pubic hair
- stroke your lower back

Psychological actions to help empty your bladder:

- turn on a tap – the sound of running water can help stimulate your brain into starting to urinate
- make a gentle sssssshhhhh noise or whistle

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at **imperial.pals@nhs.net**. The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to express your concerns in **writing** to:
Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street,
London W2 1NY.
Email: **ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net**
Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.patient.information@nhs.net

Wi-fi

We have a free wi-fi service for basic filtered browsing and a premium wi-fi service (requiring payment) at each of our five hospitals. Look for WiFiSPARK_FREE or WiFiSPARK_PREMIUM