



Urinary incontinence

– here is what you need to know

Most people, regardless of ethical background, age or sex, will at some point suffer from urinary incontinence. As troublesome as it may be, people generally hesitate to ask for advice or help. The embarrassment is keeping us from overcoming the threshold of possible relief through professional help. As the social stigma dictates, we would rather put up with it than let anybody know about a certain weakness we have. People would rather stop their social life, stay at home, or even find all kinds of excuses to avoid friends – all just to make sure nobody will see them in the embarrassing situation of leaking urine. But it does not have to be like this. There are many trained health professionals who could help you to get through your daily life without having to miss out on your favourite indoor or outdoor activities such as yoga classes or meeting your friends for dinner.

Your request for help will be handled with the utmost respect and confidentiality. The professional integrity of health personnel will help you to find a way of dealing with your bladder problem without feeling embarrassed. Sometimes it does not require a lot – for example, a slight change in your daily fluid intake might already do wonders.

Yes, specialists are trained in this field and do treat patients according to certain categories, but this is necessary to find the right management plan to help you enjoy your everyday life again. For example, stress urinary incontinence is a common type of urinary bladder problem which women of childbearing age will likely encounter. This is a consequence of the enormous pressure or stress being put on the pelvic floor muscle when going through childbirth. Up to 50% of women belonging to this category will temporarily suffer from stress incontinence when coughing, sneezing, laughing or lifting heavy objects. This is sometimes combined with the reduced sensation for the urge to pass urine at the “right” time. Even though this problem should pass within three months, there is immediate help available to regain the “right” timing for

• passing urine by inserting a mechanical device into the
• vagina to support the temporarily displaced bladder outlet.

• Another very common problem is a conditioned urinary
• bladder problem known as urgency urinary incontinence.
• Our working hours sometimes do not allow us to pass
• urine when the urge is felt, hence we condition ourselves
• to pass urine when there is no need to go, or when it is
• too late. The complexity of the nervous system gets
• turned upside down so we do not allow the bladder to
• be relieved when it is full, but rather at times when it is
• convenient for us to do so, for example when we are near
• a toilet. Our bladder inadvertently responds to the toilet
• sign and suddenly there is an uncontrollable urge to go.
• Through (toilet) training, one can relearn the appropriate
• times to go. Sometimes one might experience both these
• conditions simultaneously, which is known as mixed
• urinary incontinence. However, even for this there is a
• 100% cure with the help of a specialist who offers therapy
• in combination with a physiotherapist.

• Typically, men will start to face urinary problems from the
• age of 50. In fact, one out of every three men will suffer
• from benign prostatic hyperplasia, which is a reduced
• flow in the urinary stream. Incomplete emptying of the
• urinary bladder and a residual volume, followed by post-
• void dribbling, are the main complaints. Help is available,
• but you need to come forward and see a doctor. There is
• specific medication to increase the capacity of the bladder
• as well as medication to reduce the urethral pressure,
• which will make it possible for you to enjoy an improved
• lifestyle again.

• This article should by no means be considered a complete or
• comprehensive report on the field of urinary incontinence
• and its associated social problems, but its purpose is rather
• to support and encourage you to seek help. 🌐

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