

# Incontinence: Taking Control of your Bladder

Losing control of your bladder may have nothing to do with your age! It is possible to take control of your bladder and reduce your symptoms.

## Know

### About the different types of incontinence:

- **Urinary incontinence:** You have involuntary loss of bladder control that causes you to release urine.
- **Urgency incontinence:** You often have uncontrollable urges to pee.
- **Stress incontinence:** You pee when you sneeze, cough, or laugh.
- **Functional incontinence:** You cannot get to the bathroom fast enough.
- **Overflow incontinence:** Your bladder is full and causes dribbling and difficulty when emptying your bladder.

## Ask

- Your healthcare team about setting up a toileting plan while you are in the hospital and any instructions to follow in your discharge care plan.
- A doctor or nurse about re-training your bladder.
- A pharmacist or doctor to look at the full list of medicine you are taking to see if any of them are contributing to incontinence.
- A doctor about what kind of physical activity and how much is right for you. It is important to stay active!
- Your local healthcare store or your healthcare team about which type of incontinence product, such as liners and pads, is best for you to help enhance personal hygiene.

## Do

- Wear pants with minimal number of buttons or zippers so that fewer things get in the way of your peeing.
- Use unscented, moistened disposable wipes, or a warm washcloth to clean up after an accident and change to clean clothes as soon as possible.
- Pelvic floor exercises, as directed by a doctor, nurse, or physiotherapist, to strengthen the muscles that support your bladder and urethra.
- Drink plenty of non-caffeinated beverages to stay hydrated. If you do not drink enough water, your bladder lining may become irritated and increase your incontinence symptoms.
- Exercise regularly and eat a nutritious diet to maintain a healthy weight.
- For caregivers - Encourage older family members to use the toilet at regular intervals, especially if they are living with a cognitive impairment.



This handout was adapted with permission from the Regional Geriatric Program.