

BLADDER RETRAINING



Bladder retraining can be a helpful tool in **managing symptoms of overactive bladder, leakage, and urge incontinence**. Bladder retraining has been proven to reduce urinary leakage, urinary frequency/urgency and nighttime voiding.

It is possible to train your bladder to **hold larger quantities** of urine **for longer periods** of time. We can start this process by increasing times between voids. It sounds simple but this process can take time and commitment. It can be worrisome to think of not using the bathroom so often. Bladder retraining, along with the other tools your therapist has given you, empowers you to control your bladder instead of your bladder controlling you!

SCHEDULE

- Begin with a voiding schedule of every (minutes/hours). If you feel the need to use the restroom before this time try to use urge suppression along with distraction techniques like counting backwards from 100 to increase your waiting time.
- You may use longer and longer waiting times as you gain bladder control. Generally, the goal is to void every 2-4 hours.
- If you start experiencing bladder pain or your bladder pain increases, talk to your medical provider. This might not be the best plan for you.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS



- Empty your bladder first thing in the morning and last thing before bed.
- Try not to rush to the bathroom. Go slowly and use your urge strategies as needed.
- If you cannot resist the urge and break the schedule that is okay, do not get discouraged. Return to the schedule once you have used the bathroom.
- Some people find it helpful to start bladder training on a day they don't leave the house. This can eliminate fears or worries of having a leak in public.
- It is common to urinate at the same time as a bowel movement and that's okay - reset the time from then.
- Focus on success. Every time you make your interval is a reason to celebrate!
- Don't hesitate to wear protection while practicing!

Lee, H. E., Cho, S. Y., Lee, S., Kim, M., & Oh, S. J. (2013). Short-term Effects of a Systematized Bladder Training Program for Idiopathic Overactive Bladder: A Prospective Study. *International neurourology journal*, 17(1), 11-17.
<https://doi.org/10.5213/inj.2013.17.1.11>