

Detrusor Muscle is the name of the bladder muscle. Detrusor Instability is when the muscle contracts without you being able to control it. Sometimes you may hear it referred to as having an 'unstable bladder'.

Someone with an unstable bladder can suffer from:

Urgency: A strong desire to pass urine whether or not it is convenient. The muscle of the bladder wall contracts and tries to squeeze urine out.

Urge Incontinence: Sometimes the need to pass urine is so intense that the person cannot hold on and they end up wet.

Frequency: Often urgency is combined with a desire to pass urine more frequently. An unstable bladder can make people go to the toilet up to 20 times a day.

Nocturia: Someone with an unstable bladder gets little relief at night, getting up several times to pass urine.

Unstable bladders are quite common and rarely an indication of a serious disease. Often the cause is unknown.

Treatment

Completing a bladder chart will let the nurse see how often you pass urine, and the times when you are wet. It will also show how much you are drinking and when. Please complete this for one week to allow us to have an accurate record upon which we can plan your treatment.

Bladder Retraining: You can re-educate your brain to control the bladder muscle again. It can take weeks to control urgency (rushing to the toilet). Be prepared to persevere. The type of bladder retraining depends on your personal bladder chart but the two most common programmes are listed below. Your nurse will tell you which one to follow:

Programme One: When you need to pass urine, wait and count to ten and then go. When you have mastered this, increase the count to 20, 30, 40 and so on. Eventually you will be able to wait 15-30 minutes before pass urine.

Programme Two: Dependant on your bladder chart, you will be given a series of times to go and pass urine. For example, every two hours even if you have no desire to go. Try to hang on in between. The following activities may help you: count or recite a poem, do a pelvic floor exercise, sit down on a hard chair-you may think of others.

If you are following either of these programmes and you wake up in the night needing to pass urine, please go immediately. Hanging on will only keep you awake.

Pelvic Floor Exercises: Your nurse might have taught you pelvic floor exercises. Please practice these as they will help you to 'hang on'.

Medication: You may have tablets to relax the bladder muscle and stop it squeezing uncontrollably. You usually start with a small dose and gradually increase it. Please follow the instructions carefully. Some common side effects can be a dry mouth, constipation, blurred vision, nausea, abdominal discomfort and facial flushing. The occurrence of these effects can be reduced by lowering the dose so please consult your doctor for advice.

We hope you understand the diagnosis and treatment. Eventually you will pass urine every three to five hours (five to seven times a day) and be able to wait until it is convenient for you. It may take weeks or months and is not always easy so be prepared to persevere. Do not give up. Help, treatment and advice are available.

- Constipation can make it worse so choose a high fibre diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Try to drink six-eight glasses of water a day. Not drinking enough makes the urine concentrated.
- Cut down on caffeine as this can irritate your bladder and make you pass urine more often. (tea, coffee, hot chocolate, coke)
- Don't get in to the habit of going to the toilet 'just in case'. Only go when you need to (remember your bladder re-training programme)
- Anxiety has a tremendous effect on your bladder and is the hardest aspect of lifestyle change, but try to identify and specific anxieties/times when you lose control, and discuss these with your nurse.

Urodynamics

What is Detrusor Instability?



This leaflet will help you understand detrusor instability, why it gives you the symptoms you have, and how your treatment will work.

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