

Continence and surgery

Pelvic floor exercises

You are advised to begin pelvic floor exercises as soon as your surgery has been decided on. Please do not wait to begin these exercises until after your surgery.

Continence pads

To ensure you will receive continence pads on your return from surgery on the mainland, you are advised to contact Rosemary MacRitchie, NHSWI Clinical Nurse Specialist Tissue Viability/Continence Advisor, **as soon as you receive a date for your surgery.**

Please note that unless you have provided her with your surgery date in advance, you may have to wait at least one week for continence supplies after you have returned home.

Further information

If you wish to discuss your continence, or if you are going for surgery, please contact:

Rosemary MacRitchie
Clinical Nurse Specialist Tissue Viability/
Continence Advisor

Tel. 01851 763302
Email: rosemary.macritchie@nhs.scot

In the first instance please contact by email if possible.

In the event the Clinical Nurse Specialist Tissue Viability/Continence Advisor is unavailable, please contact your Community Nurse.

Further information and help

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Rosemary MacRitchie
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Continence Advisor

Tel. 01851 763302
Email: rosemary.macritchie@nhs.scot

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We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website: www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback or share your story at: www.careopinion.org.uk or tel. 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 708069 Monday-Friday between 9am-5.30pm.

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Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor-patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you to interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

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Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar
NHS Western Isles

Your bladder and bowel health



Useful information and advice for men

Introduction

This leaflet provides information and advice on some simple steps you can take to improve or maintain your bladder and bowel health.

Helpful tips

Follow these tips to help keep your bladder and bowel healthy:

- **Drink enough fluids** (especially water). Most healthy people should try to drink 1.5 to 2 litres per day (six to eight, 8-ounce glasses of fluid).

Water is the best fluid for bladder and bowel health. At least half of fluid intake should be water. Some people need to drink less water because of certain conditions, such as kidney failure or heart disease. Your healthcare professional can offer further advice.

- **Cut out caffeine.** Avoid caffeinated foods and drinks e.g. coffee, tea, chocolate and most sodas. Instead, change to decaffeinated fluids and foods. By having even one caffeinated drink during the day this can have a negative effect on your bladder.

If you consume large amounts of caffeinated foods and drinks, you may need to reduce your intake gradually to avoid adverse effects e.g. headaches.

- **Reduce your alcohol intake.** It's important to know that the effects of alcohol on your health will depend on how much you drink.

- **Quit smoking.** Tobacco smoke contains over 5,000 chemicals and can affect every part of the body from your skin to your brain.
- **Avoid constipation.** Eat plenty of high-fibre foods (like whole grains, vegetables, and fruits), drinking enough water, and being physically active can help prevent constipation.
- **Keep a healthy weight.** Making healthy food choices and being physically active can help you keep a healthy weight.
- **Exercise regularly.** Physical activity can help prevent bladder and bowel problems, as well as constipation.

It can also help you keep a healthy weight, improve your mental health and help you to sleep better.

- **Do pelvic floor muscle exercises.** Pelvic floor exercises, also known as Kegel exercises, help hold urine in the bladder.

Daily exercises can strengthen these muscles, which can help keep urine from leaking when you sneeze, cough, lift, laugh, or have a sudden urge to urinate.

Ask your health professional for further Pelvic Floor guidance or visit our Useful Links section.

- **Go regularly.** Use the bathroom often and when needed. Try to urinate at least every 3-4 hours or 5-6 times a day.
- **Stay relaxed and take your time.** Be in a relaxed position while urinating. Relaxing

the muscles around the bladder will make it easier to empty the bladder. It is best to sit on the toilet seat.

- **Fully empty.** Always double void - empty your bladder, stand up, move around the bathroom, sit down again, and attempt to empty a second time. Ensure you've emptied your bladder properly.
- **Urinate after sex.** Everyone should urinate shortly after sex to flush away bacteria that may have entered the urethra during sex.
- **Stay fresh.** Wear cotton underwear and loose-fitting clothes.

Urine colour chart

