

# Ask The Nurse - Customer Questions



**Q I am a young mum and embarrassed that when I have joined my children playing on their trampoline I have wet my pants. It has also happened when I have been running. Why?**

**A** Pelvic floor muscle weakness is a common cause of leakage on exercise. The pelvic floor muscles support your bladder, uterus and the bowel and help control both bladder and bowel. Pelvic floor muscles are like any muscle in the body and need to be exercised. If not they will weaken. Your doctor, Continence Nurse Advisors, and Physiotherapists, can assess and advise you.

**Q I am a retired gentleman and have difficulty in starting to pass urine. Sometimes I feel I want to go more frequently at night, but then I cannot commence. What can I do about this?**

**A** Talk to your doctor. The prostate gland sits below the neck of the bladder, surrounding the bladder outlet (the urethra). It undergoes changes with age. In some men these changes may be associated with urinary symptoms such as a slow and/or interrupted stream, difficulty starting to pass urine, increased need to pass urine more frequently, a feeling of incomplete emptying and, in some cases, loss of urine control.

**Q Is stress incontinence related to anxiety?**

**A** No stress incontinence is caused by a rise in abdominal pressure or physical exertion on the body. This commonly is in the form of coughing, sneezing, lifting, running, laughing straining or making a sudden positional change like squatting. If the pressure rise inside your abdomen which occurs with

these activities is greater than the pressure keeping your bladder outlet closed, leakage can occur.

**Q I have heard you should drink six to eight cups of fluid a day. Does it matter what type of fluid you drink?**

**A** It is good to drink six to eight cups of water each day unless your doctor advises you otherwise. Water is best but other kinds of fluid may be included. Fluids containing caffeine can act as kidney stimulants and bladder irritants so are best in moderation. Examples of these are coffee, cola and some other fizzy drinks, cocoa and tea. Instant coffee has less caffeine than brewed coffee. Tea has less caffeine than coffee.

**Q Can dementia cause incontinence?**

**A** A person with dementia has memory loss. The condition causes changes in the brain which may interfere with things like the ability to recognise the need to go to the toilet, find the toilet, and understand when the bladder is empty. For a person with dementia incontinence can worsen in unfamiliar surroundings, or if they feel depressed, anxious or stressed. A person with dementia can also experience incontinence for a whole range of reasons such as urinary tract infection or constipation. It is therefore important to see your health care professional to find the underlying cause of the problem.

**A very useful help sheet on dementia and incontinence is available through Alzheimer's Australia on [www.alzheimers.org.au](http://www.alzheimers.org.au)**



## Need advice? Contact our Continence Nurse Advisor

Get expert continence advice and support from our Continence Nurse Advisor. Advice is available to healthcare professionals, carers and individuals

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