

## **OTHER THINGS THAT MAY AFFECT YOUR BLADDER:**

- Women are more prone to developing bladder infections. Avoid nylon underpants and pantyhose. Cotton underpants are preferable. Avoid perfumed toilet tissue as dyes and perfumes may be irritating.
- Bubble baths or douche
- Absorbent products should only be those for incontinence purposes; never use menstrual pads; the incontinence pads “wick away moisture”, decreasing the risk of infection/ irritation.
- Being overweight may have a significant impact on the severity of your incontinence and is also a dangerous health problem. Women especially may notice an improvement in bladder control if they lose weight.
- Cigarette smoking is irritating to the bladder lining and is associated with bladder cancer. Coughing associated with smoking may lead to stress incontinence during repeated coughing spasms.
- Caffeine is a bladder irritant and diuretic; it will make you go to the bathroom more frequently. Caffeine is found in chocolate, soft drinks, over the counter medications, and is used as a flavoring agent in many baked goods and processed foods.
- Limiting fluid concentrates the urine, aggravating, rather than alleviating urgency and frequency (urine salts: Urea, uric acid, and creatinine are irritating to the bladder wall and increase involuntary contractions). Concentrated urine also increases risk of UTI (urinary tract infection).
  - Desired fluid intake average: 50 oz. (150cc)
  - Range= not less than 40 oz./ or greater than 80 oz.
- If your fluid intake is low, gradually increase volume: Add additional 4 oz., then in four days, another 4 oz. For four days, and so on until desired intake is reached.
- The way in which fluids are taken also affects the bladder and control ability
- Drinking a large volume of fluid at one time, such as at meal time, forces the bladder to cope with a challenging filling speed of a large volume in a brief period of time. This leads to overwhelming sensations of urgency. Patterned habits of drinking fluids mainly with meals and little to nothing in between, and drinking just before going to bed increase the likelihood of leakage.
- Intake should be spread throughout the day, avoiding high volumes at one time and limiting fluids within hours before retiring.