



KAISER PERMANENTE®

## URO-GYNECOLOGY PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

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### YOUR PLAN FOR BLADDER HEALTH

**Kegel Exercises (*Pelvic Muscle Exercise*)**

**How to identify the correct muscle:**

1. To find the muscle, place a finger inside your vagina. Try to squeeze around your finger. This is the muscle you want to exercise. This muscle is the same one you use to hold back gas or to stop the stream of urine in the middle of voiding.
2. Do not use your stomach, leg, or buttock muscles. The most common mistake is using too many muscles. To find out if you are also contracting your stomach muscles, place your hand on your abdomen while you squeeze your pelvic floor muscles. If you feel your stomach get hard, then you are also using these muscles.

**Doing the exercises:**

Squeeze the muscle, which you identified earlier, and hold for a count of 3 seconds. Then relax for a count of 3 seconds. Do a series of 10 of these exercises, 4 times a day.

**Timed Voiding/Bladder Training Drills**

The goal of this bladder-training program is to increase the interval between voiding, up to \_\_\_\_\_ hours, and to restore continence and adequate urinary control.

1. Go to the toilet and empty your bladder every \_\_\_\_\_ during waking hours.
2. Do so regardless of whether you feel the urge to void or not.
3. The amount of urine is irrelevant.
4. The important aspect is the voluntary mechanics of voiding.
5. Avoid going to the toilet between scheduled times.
6. Make a special effort to suppress urgency.
7. Do not feel embarrassed if you leak urine.

After one week, increase the time between voiding by 15 minutes.

Example: First week, void every \_\_\_\_\_

Second week, void every \_\_\_\_\_

Third week, void every \_\_\_\_\_

Do this until you have reached a time span of \_\_\_\_\_ between voiding.

**Stop all caffeine intake**

Caffeine is a strong irritant to the bladder and may increase your urgency and incontinence.

Not allowed: Regular coffee and tea, cocoa, chocolate products, soft drinks with caffeine such as Coke, Pepsi. Diet Coke, Mountain Dew, etc.

Allowed: Decaffeinated coffee and tea, herbal tea, caffeine-free soda, juice, water.

**Stop smoking**

Nicotine from cigarettes is a bladder irritant and may increase your urgency and incontinence. Coughing, caused by smoking, weakens pelvic floor support muscles.

**Limit excessive fluid intake**

- Maximum daily intake of 6 glasses of fluid
- Do not drink much fluid after 6 p.m.

**Medications**

You have been given a prescription for the following medication(s). Call your doctor at \_\_\_\_\_ in 4 weeks to discuss how you are tolerating the medication.

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