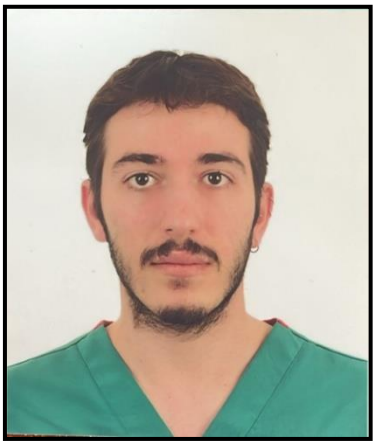
PATIENT EDUCATION FORMS



Turkish translation: Dr. Ege ÖZGÜR

University of Health Sciences, Haydarpaşa Numune Training and Research Hospital, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

---

Urinary Incontinence

Pelvic Floor (Kegel) Exercises

Surgery to Treat Stress Incontinence in Women

Treatments for Urge Incontinence in Women

https://www.uptodate.com/contents/urinary-incontinence-in-women-beyond-the-basics

https://www.uptodate.com/contents/pelvic-floor-muscle-exercises-beyond-the-basics

https://www.uptodate.com/contents/female-stress-urinary-incontinence-choosing-a-primary-surgical-procedure

https://www.uptodate.com/contents/urgency-urinary-incontinence-overactive-bladder-oab-in-females-treatmen

These patient information forms are created by doctors and editors at UpToDate.

Patient Education: Urinary Incontinence (The Basics)

What is urinary incontinence? — "Urinary incontinence" is a medical term used when a person leaks urine or loses control of their bladder. It is often simply called "incontinence."

Urinary incontinence is a very common problem. If you have this problem, there are many treatments that can help you. There are also things you can do on your own to stop or reduce urine leakage, so you don't have to just "live with it."

What are the symptoms of urinary incontinence? — There are different types of urinary incontinence. Each type has different symptoms. The 3 most common types are:

- Stress incontinence – People with stress incontinence leak urine when they laugh, cough, sneeze, or do anything that puts "pressure on" their abdomen.
- Urge incontinence – People with urge incontinence feel a sudden, strong need to urinate. Often, the "urge to urinate" is so strong that they cannot get to the bathroom in time. "Overactive bladder" is another term used for having sudden and frequent urges to urinate. People with an overactive bladder may or may not leak urine.
- Mixed urinary incontinence – People with mixed urinary incontinence have symptoms of both stress incontinence and urge incontinence.

Is there anything I can do to feel better? — Yes. Some steps that can help reduce urine leakage include:

- Reduce the amount of fluids you drink, especially a few hours before going to bed.
- Avoid foods and drinks that worsen your symptoms. Some people find that alcohol, caffeine, spicy or acidic foods irritate the bladder.
- If you are overweight, lose weight.

- If you have diabetes, try to keep your blood sugar as close to normal as possible.
- If you take medicines called diuretics, plan ahead. These medicines increase your need to urinate. Take them when you know you will have access to a bathroom for a few hours.

These techniques can also help you gain bladder control:

- **Bladder retraining – During bladder retraining, you go to the bathroom at set times. For example, you might decide to go every hour. You go to the bathroom even if you don't feel the need. If you need to go earlier, try to wait until the hour is up. Once you get used to going every hour, you will increase the time between bathroom visits. Over time, you can "retrain" your bladder to wait 3 or 4 hours between visits.**
- **Pelvic floor exercises – Pelvic floor exercises strengthen the muscles that control urine flow. These exercises can help you, but people often do them incorrectly. Ask your doctor or nurse how to do them correctly.**

Should I see my doctor or nurse? — Yes. Your doctor or nurse can find out what might be causing your urinary incontinence. They can also suggest ways to fix the problem.

When you talk to your doctor or nurse, ask if any medicines you take could be causing your urinary incontinence. Some medicines can cause urinary incontinence, while others can make it worse.

How is urinary incontinence treated? — Treatment options vary depending on the type of urinary incontinence you have and your gender. Some treatment options include:

- Medicines that relax the bladder
- Surgeries to repair tissues that support the bladder or improve urine flow
- Electrical stimulation of the nerves that relax the bladder

What will my life be like?— Many people with urinary incontinence can regain bladder control or at least reduce the amount of leakage they experience. The important thing is to talk to your doctor or nurse about it. Then work with them to find an approach that will help you.