



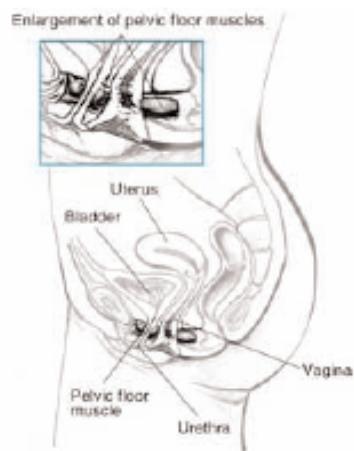
Urological Disorder Types

Stress Incontinence

If coughing, laughing, sneezing, or other movements that put pressure on the bladder cause you to leak urine, you may have stress incontinence. Physical changes resulting from pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause often cause stress incontinence. This type of incontinence is common in women and, in many cases, can be treated.

Childbirth and other events can injure the scaffolding that helps support the bladder in women. Pelvic floor muscles, the vagina, and ligaments support your bladder (see below). If these structures weaken, your bladder can move downward, pushing slightly out of the bottom of the pelvis toward the vagina. This prevents muscles that ordinarily force the urethra shut from squeezing as tightly as they should. As a result, urine can leak into the urethra during moments of physical stress. Stress incontinence also occurs if the squeezing muscles weaken.

Stress incontinence can worsen during the week before your menstrual period. At that time, lowered estrogen levels might lead to lower muscular pressure around the urethra, increasing chances of leakage. The incidence of stress incontinence increases following menopause.



Urge Incontinence

If you lose urine for no apparent reason after suddenly feeling the need or urge to urinate, you may have urge incontinence. A common cause of urge incontinence is inappropriate



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bladder contractions. Abnormal nerve signals might be the cause of these bladder spasms.

Urge incontinence can mean that your bladder empties during sleep, after drinking a small amount of water, or when you touch water or hear it running (as when washing dishes or hearing someone else taking a shower). Certain fluids and medications such as diuretics or emotional states such as anxiety can worsen this condition. Some medical conditions, such as hyperthyroidism and uncontrolled diabetes, can also lead to or worsen urge incontinence.

Involuntary actions of bladder muscles can occur because of damage to the nerves of the bladder, to the nervous system (spinal cord and brain), or to the muscles themselves. Multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, stroke, and injury - including injury that occurs during surgery - all can harm bladder nerves or muscles.

Overactive Bladder

Overactive bladder occurs when abnormal nerves send signals to the bladder at the wrong time, causing its muscles to squeeze without warning. Voiding up to seven times a day is normal for many women, but women with overactive bladder may find that they must urinate even more frequently.

Specifically, the symptoms of overactive bladder include

- urinary frequency - bothersome urination eight or more times a day or two or more times at night
- urinary urgency - the sudden, strong need to urinate immediately
- urge incontinence - leakage or gushing of urine that follows a sudden, strong urge
- nocturia - awaking at night to urinate

Functional Incontinence

People with medical problems that interfere with thinking, moving, or communicating may have trouble reaching a toilet. A person with Alzheimer's disease, for example, may not think well enough to plan a timely trip to a restroom. A person in a wheelchair may have a hard time getting to a toilet in time. Functional incontinence is the result of these physical and medical conditions. Conditions such as arthritis often develop