



Chronic Pain and Women's Health Newsletter

How to Gain Bladder Control

Incontinence or difficulty controlling bladder function is more common and costly than most people realize. Just consider the following statistics (sources: Agency for Health Care Policies and Research, National Institute of Health):

- *25 million adults
- *2 x more women than men
- *30% of new mothers
- *50% of diabetics
- *2nd leading cause of admittance to nursing homes
- *avg person spends 3000 annually on control products
- *6.4 billion in annual

medical costs

- *5% of children
- *5% of men, especially after prostate surgery

As you can see from the numbers, this problem has a great impact on people both personally and financially. Also, since this can be a very embarrassing problem, 3/4 of the people who suffer from incontinence won't speak to a medical professional about it to get the help they need.

The good news is that there IS help. The most effective treatment involves a combination of things. The first line of defense is avoiding foods

that can irritate the bladder. Coffee and Tea are both bladder irritants and eliminating these can go a long way in improving your ability to control urine leakage. Other bladder irritants to avoid include high acid fruit juices such as orange and cranberry.

It is also important that you drink enough water and take



You can improve bladder control and regain your freedom!

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Clemens Physical Therapy PLLC

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Special points of interest:

- ☺ Help for Bladder Control
- ☺ Special Treatment for TMJ-Jaw Pain
- ☺ Preventing Headaches
- ☺ Your Questions Answered
- ☺ Contact information on back page

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Solving The TMJ Pain Puzzle

TMJ or temporomandibular joint pain is a debilitating problem which involves jaw joint pain. There may also be long-term symptoms such as headaches, face pain, neck pain, ear pain, and difficulty eating and talking.

It has been estimated that

25-85% of the population experiences TMJ dysfunction. It is more common in 13-35 year olds. Women are affected 4 times more often than men.

Common symptoms of TMJ include jaw pain, limited mouth opening, pain with chewing and talking, and

grinding and clicking in the joint.

This type of problem can be frustrating to deal with. There are multiple factors that lead to the symptoms that people experience.

TMJ sufferers are usually

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TMJ cont...

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experiencing stress in their daily lives which causes them to grit and grind their teeth. Many times they do this at night when they are not even aware of doing it.

Posture also plays a big role. Due to stress and poor habits, many people have poor posture during the day. This changes the position and function of the jaw joint, leading to wear and tear.

All of these factors lead to associated problems such as severe headaches. People also suffer with neck and shoulder pain.

Due to the many factors that lead to TMJ problems, successful treatment

must address each.

It is important to see your Dental professional regarding your jaw function. He or she can help you improve the alignment of the teeth and jaw for better performance. There are special splints that can be made to help with this.

You must also improve your posture. Make sure your shoulders are back and your head is kept over your shoulders. This lets the muscles of the head relax and the jaw joint function properly.

Above all, you must find ways to deal

with stress. You can't eliminate it entirely, but you can decrease its affect. Relax by focusing on your breathing, taking a walk, or doing a fun activity.

TMJ can be helped if you do the right combination of things. Your Dental professional can help you with your teeth alignment. A Physical Therapist can help you

learn to relax and improve your posture, as well as decrease headaches and neck pain.



Decrease stress and improve posture for help with jaw pain

Prevention Tips: Headaches

Headaches and migraines affect many people. They run the gamut from just making you feel bad to causing nausea and missed work days. Here are some ways to prevent headaches and tips for how to deal with a headache once it starts:

1. Watch what you eat.

Some people have sensitivity to certain foods or chemicals in foods. Some common triggers are chocolate, cheese, and

processed meats.

2. Eat the right stuff

Low blood sugar from not eating enough can also lead to headaches. Make sure you get several small "meals" spaced evenly throughout the day to keep your blood sugar stable

3. Drink plenty of water

Dehydration can also lead to irritated

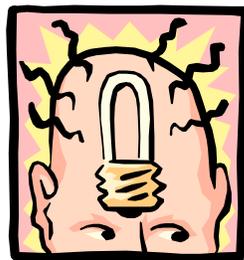
nerves in the head, leading to headaches. Coffee and tea do not count!

4. Remove as much stress as possible. It's not possible to remove ALL stress, but any improvement can help. The first step is to notice it. Then try to take a few deep breaths. Just a few seconds to breathe before a headache starts may keep you pain free!

Once a Headache Starts-Try These Tips

The best way to deal with a headache is to keep it from starting to begin with. Once one starts, your best bet is to deal with it as quickly as possible. Try the following:

1. Focus on your breathing. This will act to relax your tight muscles and sends signals to your nervous system to "calm down". Breathe slowly in for four



Self-help for headaches!

counts and out for four counts.

2. Pinch yourself!

Squeeze gently but firmly in the web of skin between your thumb and first finger. This is an acupressure point that works well to stop a headache.

3. Try peppermint oil. Massage a few drops on your temples. The combination of the smell and

the rubbing will act to relax tight muscles. (Test your skin for sensitivity to the oil before using).

4. Sit up straight!

Posture has a huge effect on the muscles that cause headaches. Relax your shoulders and keep your head from jutting forward

5. Keep taking deep breaths.

Besides relaxing your muscles, your brain needs the oxygen during a headache.

How to Gain Bladder Control Cont:

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regular bathroom breaks for normal bladder function.

As the pelvic floor muscles are very important in bladder control, specific exercises are very helpful. However it is very important to have a Physical Therapist who specializes in treating this problem show you how to do these exercises correctly. As these muscles are internal, you will have difficulty determining yourself if you are doing them correctly. If done incorrectly, you may make the problem worse.

Your therapist will use biofeedback and specialized instructions to help

you do the exercises correctly. Biofeedback is a way to "see" the muscle activity by using special sensors that are hooked up to a monitor that you can see. By being able to see the muscle activity and get "feedback" when you are doing the exercises correctly, most people can improve their pelvic muscles fairly quickly. Statistics show that 80% of people can be "dry" in as short as 2-4 weeks (Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, Hulme and Pen-



There is help for improving bladder control

ner)

There are also medications to help you control your bladder. For people who have a "dropped" bladder, surgery may be indicated to support the bladder and allow it to function properly.

As you can see, there are many options available to people who suffer from incontinence. Don't suffer with this problem needlessly.

Talk to your medical professional regarding the best options for you.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: You suggest that reducing stress and breathing can help with problems such as TMJ and pain. I don't have time to breathe and can't get rid of stress. Will these things really help me?

A: Yes, they will.

I know that life is busy and I am not suggesting that you take a month off and escape your life to live at a mon-

astery and meditate. I am suggesting that even simple things such as taking 5 deep breaths when you feel uptight, can significantly affect not only your pain and mood, but alter your biochemistry as well. It doesn't take but a few seconds and it's FREE!

Try breathing before the pain starts or when you first notice tension for the best effect.

Q: Why do women seem to have more problems than men in certain areas of health and pain such as incontinence and TMJ?

A: It is true that women are affected more with incontinence and TMJ. Also, conditions such as fibromyalgia, headaches, migraines, osteoporosis, and complications from breast cancer affect more females than males.

Females are more prone to problems because of several factors. Women

have more fluctuations in hormones which makes them more prone to migraines and certain cancers.

They are also more prone to bone thinning after they lose some bone protecting hormones during and after menopause.

Pregnancy also causes a lot of physical changes. It is not uncommon to have difficulty with bladder control during or after pregnancy due to the stretching of the pelvic

floor. Women who have had multiple children also have more trouble with "dropped" bladders later on in life.

All of this does not mean that these conditions are exclusive to women. Men and even children may also have trouble with problems such as headaches and incontinence.

The good news is there is help. Don't be afraid to ask questions!



Why do women seem to have more health problems?

Taking a few seconds to BREATHE can help eliminate pain

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Helping People Who Hurt



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The content of this newsletter is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose or suggest treatment for individuals. Please see your health care provider regarding your specific needs.

Fibromyalgia
Chronic Pain
Headaches
Bladder Control
Pelvic Pain
TMJ (Jaw Pain)
Osteoporosis
Biofeedback
Tai Chi, Pilates, Yoga
Manual Therapy