

REHAB NEWS



Submitted By: Therapy Department at Healthcare Therapy Services, Inc.

Regaining Control: Managing Urinary Incontinence

Have you ever leaked urine when you cough, sneeze, laugh or lift?

Have you ever had a sudden and uncontrollable need to urinate?

Have you ever lost control of your bladder?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may find yourself struggling with urinary incontinence and you're not alone.

What is Urinary Incontinence?

It's a condition defined as the inability to hold urine in the bladder. The severity ranges from occasional leaking due to a sneeze to having a sudden urge to urinate that you can't make it quickly enough to the toilet.

Estimates say that urinary incontinence affects 25 million American adults. Though incontinence is a very common issue, most people don't feel comfortable talking to their doctor about it or they think it is a normal part of aging. Urinary incontinence doesn't have to be a normal part of the day-to-day, effective treatment options are available.

Talking to your doctor about urinary incontinence can be a tough subject, but don't let a feeling of embarrassment keep you from your best life. Some treatments include: medication, surgery, injections, bladder training, fluid/diet management, and exercise. The treatment that you and your doctor decide on will be determined by the severity and the type of urinary incontinence you suffer from.

Therapy's Role in Treating Urinary Incontinence

Physical and Occupational Therapy can help you regain control over your life and bladder. After performing an initial assessment, your therapist will create an individualized treatment plan specifically for you.

Therapy can provide information about:

- ◆ Diet and nutrition — to help you avoid food and drinks that may irritate the bladder
- ◆ Changing the behaviors that make your symptoms worse
- ◆ Techniques to decrease urinary urge and frequency, such as muscle strengthening or stretching
- ◆ Maintaining a healthy bathroom schedule
- ◆ Drinking healthy fluids regularly to maintain hydration
- ◆ Maintaining a regular exercise regimen or active lifestyle

Talk to your doctor about your symptoms and ask if therapy can help.

Sources: Health.com, APTA

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