

## BLADDER IRRITANTS:

1. Monitor your diet: Eliminate or decrease foods or beverages that may worsen your bladder symptoms. Some common offenders:
  - Tea
  - Coffee
  - Alcohol (worsens voiding at night)
  - Chocolate
  - Caffeinated or decaf soft drinks
  - Tomato based products
  - Spicy and acidic foods and drinks
  - Artificial sweeteners
  - Even decaf drinks have some caffeine
2. Monitor your medications: Some over the counter medications and prescription drugs can also worsen bladder problems:
  - Excedrin
  - Midol/Advil
  - Anacin
  - Dristan
  - Fluid pills/diuretics
  - Diabetes - good control of blood sugar will reduce bladder symptoms
3. Avoid constipation:
  - Increase fiber (goal: 30 grams/d): beans, oatmeal, bran, fresh fruits and vegetables, prunes
  - Every morning take: 2 tablespoons of this mixture: 1 cup apple sauce, 1 cup unprocessed wheat bran,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup prune juice
  - Exercise
  - Over the counter: magnesium 400-800 mg/d, miralax, probiotics
4. Maintain healthy weight: being overweight can add pressure on your bladder, may cause leaking with activity, cough or sneeze or with urge, weight loss: even 10% weight loss will help
5. Stop smoking
6. Drink plenty of nonirritating fluids: some women who have bladder symptoms reduce their fluid intake so they don't have to urinate as often, this may worsen your symptoms. A good goal for water intake: 50-80 oz/day. Avoid drinking large amounts at one time.
7. Reduce peeing at night - avoid/minimize drinking at night especially drinks with caffeine and alcohol. Drink the majority of fluids in first half of the day, limit fluids after 5 pm.
8. Retrain bladder
  - Voiding schedule - pee at set times, slowly increase by 15 minute increments until you are peeing every 3 hours
  - Suppress urge - sit/stand/lay down, relax(tension increases urge) lower abdominal muscles, concentrate on slow deep breathing, quick kegels 5-10 in a row, distraction, once urge decreases walk SLOWLY to bathroom
9. Exercise
  - Pelvic floor physical therapy
  - Yoga, Pilates