



## **Treatment of Urinary Incontinence**

The treatment of urinary incontinence will depend, in part, upon the type and cause of the incontinence. In most cases, treatment begins with conservative therapies, such as changes in lifestyle and treatment of reversible factors, and behavioral treatments. If these therapies are not sufficient, then medication or surgery should be considered.

In general, women with stress, urge or mixed incontinence will benefit from certain behavioral modifications. Decreasing fluid intake can reduce the frequency of leakage. Fluid intake of 32 to 64 ounces per day (from food and fluids) is sufficient for most people. More fluids is needed for increased activity, perspiration, increased heat or illness. Decreasing evening fluid intake is advised for women with frequent nighttime voids or overnight leakage.

Some foods and beverages may cause frequency and urgency. These foods includes: caffeinated beverages, alcohol, spicy foods, acidic foods, and carbonated beverages. While this has not been proven, it is reasonable to see if eliminating one or more of these items reduces symptoms of urgency and frequency.

Behavioral changes include Kegel exercises and bladder training. Performing pelvic floor exercises and increasing core body strength also are helpful. Weight loss, decreased "lifting", controlling constipation and chronic coughing is also helpful.

Medications can help with urge incontinence if dietary changes and behavioral changes are not sufficient. Surgery is often necessary for stress urinary incontinence which often related to anatomical changes related to childbearing.