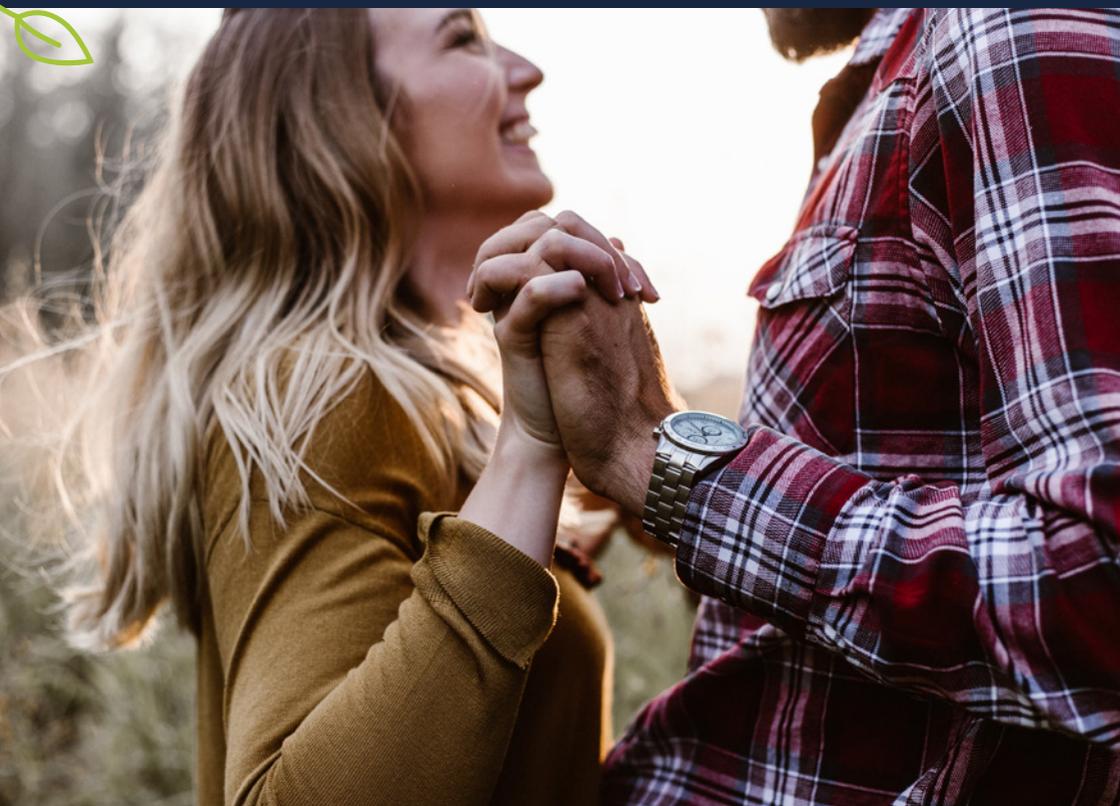




Bladder retaining



With some effort, bladder retaining is a brilliant way to help you reduce the number of times you have to go for a pee during the day. Especially if you're suffering from urge incontinence or frequency this can give you a sense of independence back!

What is bladder retaining and how can it help?

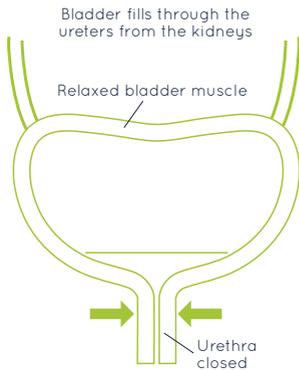
Bladder retaining is a great way to treat help you if you have an overactive bladder. What does that mean? It simply means that you might suffer from a sudden, urgent need to pee or you might need to go to the loo more often than you used to. With bladder retaining you will learn how to hold urine in your bladder to make sure you need fewer trips to the toilet.

Bladder retaining is all about making the periods between pees longer. This is done by increasing the capacity of your bladder, which means that you won't have to pee as often because your bladder will be able to hold more urine.

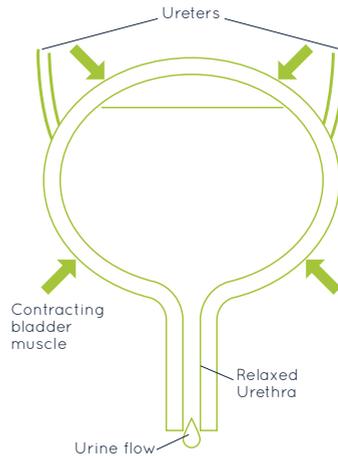
Retaining your bladder takes time and determination, though! Things won't happen from one day to the next, but if you stick with it and do it properly it can be very successful. Don't worry if it feels hard at the start! It will get easier with time as your bladder will learn how to hold more urine.



1. Filling and storage of urine



2. Emptying (voiding) of bladder



How does the bladder work

We all use our bladder multiple times a day and yet, as long as everything works as it should, we often forget that it's even there. But to understand what's happening when it suddenly doesn't do its job properly, it's important that we understand how the healthy bladder works.

But what does the bladder even look like? You can imagine it like a hollow balloon-shaped muscle that sits in your pelvis. As it fills up, the urine flows into the bladder and it expands until your body notifies you that it's time for a pee. Once the bladder has been emptied, it will flatten down and sit as a hollow balloon in your pelvis again. Its primary jobs are to store and release urine that flows from the kidneys into the bladder. Now wouldn't it be nice if all our jobs were this easy?

Benefits of bladder retaining

- It helps you lose bad habits like going for a pee “just in case”
- It helps you to reduce and control the urge to go to the loo
- It helps you to increase the time between toilet visits
- It helps you to reduce the number of accidents
- It helps to increase the amount of urine you pass with every toilet visit

Risks of bladder retaining

When you first start trying to retain your bladder, you might experience more accidents. If that happens, remember that it is completely normal and will get better with time as your bladder adjusts. There is also the risk that your bladder retention training doesn't bring the desired results. This is particularly the case if you're slacking a little. Don't worry, you're not alone; many people trying to retain their bladder will struggle with their motivation from time to time. Try talking to your nurse or doctor, they will be able to offer some tips to help you get back on track in no time!

How do you get started?

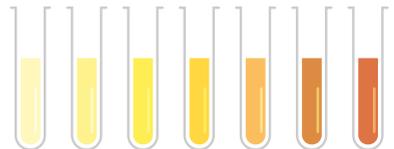
Before starting your bladder retaining programme, have a chat with your nurse or doctor to make sure that it's right for you. They might also be able to give you some more info and written instructions on how to go about retaining your bladder. Should you go ahead with a bladder retention programme you might also have some follow-up visits to keep track of your progress and adapt the schedule if needed.

How do I retain my bladder?

At the start

To begin with, go to the loo as you usually would and keep track of the following things:

- How much do you drink per day?
- What are you drinking and when?
- At what times do you go to the loo?
- How much do you pee when you go to the toilet?
You can measure this with a measuring jug!
- Any accidents you have.



This will give you an overview of your current situation and will help you to get started with your bladder retention.

After a few days

After a few days, when you feel the need to go for a pee, try wait for another 2-5 minutes before actually going to the loo. This will help to slowly stretch your bladder bit by bit, making it possible for you to hold more urine without any discomfort. And as your bladder adjusts to holding more urine, you'll need to go to the loo less often.

How long does it take to work?

If your current symptoms are mild, you may already see improvement within the first few weeks of starting your bladder retention programme. If your symptoms tend to be more severe, however, it may take longer than that. On average, it is said that it will take about 3 months to retain your bladder. This timeframe isn't set in stone, though! Everyone is different and it might take longer for you, but it might also work more quickly.

Some tips for when you REALLY need to pee:

- Stop & stay still
- Cross your legs
- Tighten your pelvic floor (this is where those Kegel exercise come in handy!)
- Try thinking of something else to take your mind off it
- Try and wait it out until the urge goes away
- Walk to the toilet but at a normal, slow pace

Tips to help

- Try to not rush when you feel the urge to pee. Sit still on a hard surface until the urge passes, instead. This can be a firm chair, your sofa arm, or the top step in your house. Don't hold on for too long at first, though, as this will lead to accidents. Try to increase it gradually instead.
- Do your pelvic floor exercises! They are great for strengthening your pelvic floor muscles and will come in super handy when it comes to holding on.
- Avoid going to the toilet "just in case"!

- Do or think something else to distract yourself from your urge.
- Try multiple different delaying tactics until you find the one that works best for you. This can be anything from crossing your legs, clenching your fists, or applying pressure to your pelvic floor by sitting on something hard.
- Don't reduce the amount of fluid you drink in order to empty your bladder less often. This can lead to nasty UTIs that will require extra treatment.
- Don't drink too much caffeine! Make sure to drink less coffee and caffeinated tea as those drinks can irritate your bladder which will make retaining harder.
- Reduce the amount of alcohol you drink! When you drink alcohol, you are producing an increased amount of urine and it might also irritate your bladder. Both of which are counterproductive to your bladder retention efforts!

How to get in touch

If you have any further questions or just want a little chat, our lovely Customer Care team is here for you.

Opening hours:

Monday – Friday: 8am to 8pm

Saturday: 8am to 1pm

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