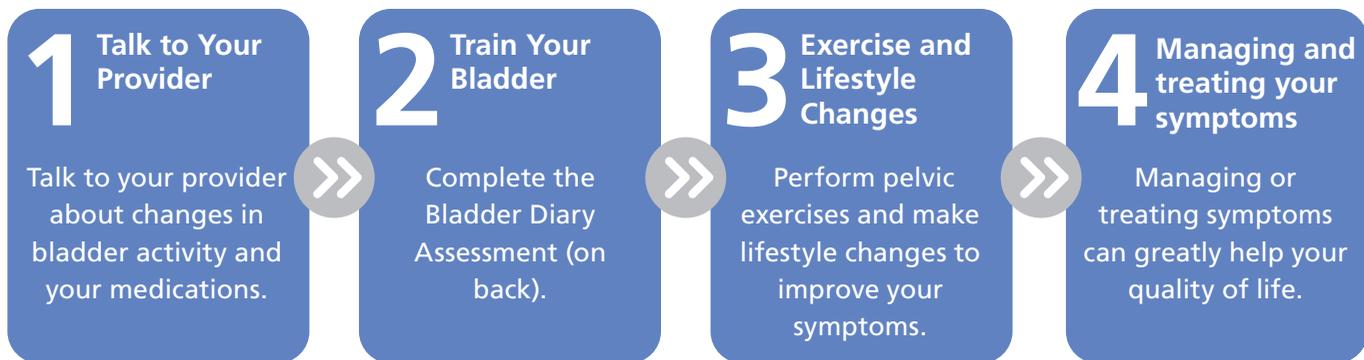


# Achieving Bladder Control

Is your bladder keeping you from enjoying life? You are not alone. More than half of women and a quarter of men experience urinary incontinence symptoms.

Here are four steps you can do to take back control of your bladder.



## Speak Up - Talk to Your Healthcare Providers:

- Are you are afraid you will not make it to the bathroom in time? – Your provider may perform several tests as well as suggest specialists such as urologists and gynecologists to properly diagnose your incontinence.
- Do you experience leaking? – Your doctor may ask about your urinary symptoms such as, when do you leak? How often do you leak? How much do you leak?
- About your medications – A doctor or pharmacist should review medications to see if any might be the cause for any urinary issues.

## Exercise and Lifestyle Changes

There are many lifestyle changes you can do to manage your symptoms, such as changing your diet, exercising and fluid intake and bladder training. Some people have found spicy foods, coffee, tea and colas to be troublesome. Tracking what you drink, when and how much, may also help. You may learn that you should limit certain things such as caffeine and alcohol as these drinks may bother the bladder. Lastly, strengthening your pelvic floor can help. Pelvic floor exercises can help urethral sphincter and pelvic floor muscles to strengthen and help with bladder control cause for any urinary issues.

## Managing and Treating your Symptoms

A bladder diary is the starting point for bladder training and helping to monitor symptoms. For 3 days, you write down what and how much you drink, and how often you go to the bathroom. This diary can help you and your provider find things that may make your symptoms worse. It can also help your provider build a bladder training plan for you. Ask for a referral to see a pelvic floor specialist to help strengthen your pelvic muscles. Also speak to your physician and see other medical remedies.



Pelvic Floor exercises can improve your bladder control and improve or stop leakage of urine.

## Train your Bladder: Bladder Control Diary

A bladder diary is a great assessment tool you may use to better understand your urinary incontinence symptoms. A diary can help you track several things, such as when and how much fluid you drink, when and how much urine you pass, how often you feel you have to go, and when and how much you may leak. Your health care professionals will use this information to help treat you.

	Time	Drinks		Number of Trips to the Restroom	Additional Leaks		Did you feel an intense urge to go?	What were you doing when you felt the urge to go?
		What Kind of drink?	How many?	How many times did you go?	How much urine?	How much?	Yes/No	Sneezing, exercising, etc
Example	1-2 p.m.	water	16.9 oz. bottle	4	About 8 oz	Yes-large amount	No	Sneezed

Source: Urinary Care Foundation