

Regular exercise can help to stimulate your bowels to work. If your problem should worsen or you feel you would like advice, please contact your healthcare professional or the Specialist Continence Advisory Service. Contact details are below.



Nottinghamshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Experience Team contact details:

Phone: 0115 993 4542

Email: complaints@nottshc.nhs.uk

Write to: Patient Experience Team, Moorgreen House, Highbury Hospital, Highbury Vale, Bulwell, Nottingham NG6 9DR

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Su richiesta, questo documento è disponibile in altre lingue e in altri formati.

Sur demande, ce document peut être fourni en d'autres langues et formats.

Na życzenie, dokument ten można uzyskać w innych językach i formatach.

यह दस्तावेज़ अनुरोध किए जाने पर अन्य भाषाओं और प्रारूपों में उपलब्ध है।

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

در صورت در خواست این سند به زبانها و شکلهای مختلف در اختیار شما قرار می گیرد.

یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں اور مطلوبہ شکلوں (فارمیٹ) میں بھی دستیاب ہے

هذه الوثيقة متاحة بلغات اخرى وباشكال غير الكتابة المقروءة وذلك عند الطلب

You may also find our other Specialist Continence leaflet series useful. You can view or download them from the Trust's website at:

www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/continence-advisory-service

Specialist Continence Advisory Service/Community Nurse contact details:

www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk

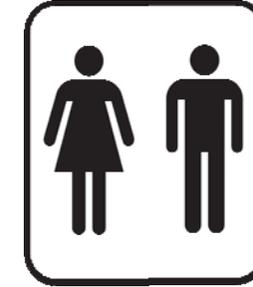


NH940

September 2018

Specialist Continence Advisory Service

Local Partnerships



Patient Information Leaflet Number 15

Sex and Your Bladder or Bowel Problem

Information about having a bladder, bowel problem or a catheter and sexual activity

positive
about integrated healthcare

Sexual relationships are an important part of life

A bladder or bowel control problem can be worrying and embarrassing but it does not mean that sexual relationships are impossible. Sexual activity can be a source of anxiety as well as pleasure for most people. It is normal to worry about what can go wrong and can be useful to think ahead about practical problems.

Before Sexual Activity

Fluid intake - It is not necessary to reduce how much you drink in total but it may help a lot to cut down on drinking, especially caffeinated or alcoholic drinks, a couple of hours before sex.

Personal hygiene - It is a good idea to wash your genital area before sexual activity, especially when you have a bladder or bowel problem. Being clean can help to increase your confidence and washing the genital and/or anal area should be done before and after sexual activity, especially after penetration, this can help to reduce the risk of urine infections. It may also help to use a soluble lubricant (such as k-y gel) to ease any friction during sexual activity.

Empty your bladder - This is particularly important for people who are incontinent because it will reduce the risk of urine leakage while being intimate.

Protecting the bed/surface - It may be necessary to protect the bed in some way if you are worried, you could use disposable bed pads which absorb moisture or a towel/sheet.

People with bowel leakage may want to discuss with their healthcare professional ways to minimise this issue, i.e. the use of anal plugs, Loperamide and working on timed toileting, anal sphincter exercises, timing of meals and emptying bowels prior to any sexual activity.

Indwelling Catheters - If you have an indwelling catheter sexual activity is still possible. If you wear a drainage bag you might want to remove this and use a catheter valve, this fits on the end of the catheter and can be opened and closed like a tap, please discuss this with your healthcare professional.

If you prefer to wear a drainage bag you might think about using a different type of bag, maybe a belly bag or one with longer or shorter tubing, suitability needs to be discussed with your healthcare professional.

Some people may prefer the removal of the catheter prior to intercourse and then taught by a healthcare professional to re-insert it, or intermittent catheterisation may also be an option, again this needs to be discussed if this is suitable. In some instances you may notice blood in your catheter/bag after sex, this may be where your catheter has rubbed against your bladder wall or urethra, this can be normal but contact your healthcare professional if you are worried or if it continues.

Women - In women reassurance needs to be given that the catheter is in the urethra and not in the vagina, the catheter can be taped across the abdomen or to the side to keep it out of the way. The best sexual position will be established through experience.

Men - In men the catheter can be folded back along the length of the penis and secured with a condom. Men should be aware that after ejaculation their urine may be cloudy, catheter blockage can occur so you may want to discuss bladder maintenance solution with your healthcare professional. If you wear a sheath system (conveen) it is normally best to remove this before sexual activity and replace with a new one afterwards, although it is possible to leave this in place and cover with a condom. Either way you would disconnect the tube and drainage bag for penetration.

After Sexual Activity - It is recommended to attend to personal hygiene after sex and maybe to pass urine if possible, sheaths/pads etc. should be replaced with new ones.

Keeping your bladder and bowel healthy - To ensure your bladder remains healthy and/or your catheter drains well you should drink at least 7-8 drinks or 1.5-2 litres every day. Water and fruit juice are better than tea or coffee. Cranberry juice can help reduce the risk of infection, check with your healthcare professional if it is suitable for you (especially if you are on Warfarin or are diabetic).

Eating at least 5 portions of fruit or vegetables and some high fibre foods every day helps to avoid constipation and potential problems with your catheter draining.

Bowels benefit from routine, try for a bowel action ½ hour after you have had a meal as this is the most usual time for a bowel movement, How often should you empty your bowels? Anything from 3 times a day to 3 times a week is considered “normal”.

Bowels should be emptied with minimal effort so when you need to go, go! Eat regular meals and try not to miss your breakfast as this gives your digestive system a “kick start” to the day.