Specialist Continence Advisory Service

Local Partnerships

Patient Information Leaflet Number 1
Your Continence Assessment

WANTING CONTROL
For Healthy Bladder and Bowels

Problems with bladder or bowel control are very common and can affect anyone, young or old. The good news is that there is always a cause or reason for the problem and many problems can be successfully treated.
**Healthy bladder habits**

Drink enough fluids, 7-8 drinks or 1.5-2 litres a day.
Relax to empty your bladder and bowels.
If possible, cut down on alcohol and drinks containing caffeine, such as tea, coffee and many “fizzy” drinks.
Never try to go to the toilet “just in case”!
Knowing how often you should pass urine is important (4-7 times in 24 hours or every 3-4 hours during the daytime).

**Healthy bowel habits**

Bowels benefit from routine — ½ hour after you have had a meal is the most usual time for a bowel action.

How often should you empty your bowels? anything from 3 times a day to 3 times a week is “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! Aim to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

Regular exercise can help to stimulate your bowels to work. If your problem should worsen, or you feel you would like advice, please see your nurse or doctor, alternatively you could contact us on the details left on the back page of this leaflet.

**Please remember**

Most bladder and bowel problems can be cured or greatly improved by simple treatments. By following the healthy bladder and bowel habits, you may be half way to solving your problem.

---

**Your continence assessment**

We would like to offer you a continence assessment to help you with your problem. This is what to expect:

- Your appointment is confidential
- A healthcare professional will talk to you about your symptoms and the problems you are having
- An examination to assess your pelvic floor muscles
- A urine test
- A non-invasive ultrasonic bladder scan
- Please ensure you complete any charts or documents sent out with your appointment letter and bring along to your appointment
- Treatment options will be discussed and a treatment plan will be agreed with you
- You may have follow up appointments to review your progress with your agreed treatment plan

This will identify your problem and enable us to suggest treatment options.

Further useful information can be accessed on the NHS website: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)