



04 BLADDER CONTROL CHECK UP

This leaflet is to help people get ready for a bladder control check up.

A bladder control check up includes some questions and a physical check by a doctor or a trained health worker. The check up will help find any bladder control problems you have and their causes. It may also help to plan the best way to manage these problems.

WHAT ARE YOUR CHOICES?

The check up is painless and you have some choices about how the check up is done.

Every person has a right to a private and personal check up that respects their needs and wishes. People also have a right to say “no” to the check up or to any other care.

In some places, there are special clinics for men only or for women only. If you want a man or a woman to do your check up, ask for this when you make an appointment for your check up.

Many clinics can make plans for an interpreter (the same sex if you need it), at no cost to you. Check with your local health centre. You can take a family member or friend with you, if that helps you feel better about the check up.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE THE CHECK UP?

You may need to keep a bladder chart before the check up. The bladder chart may look like this:

Time	Amount Passed	Comments
5:00am	250 ml	“leaked a bit on the way to the toilet”
7.30am	70 ml	“burning”
9.15am	160 ml	“pain”

In the comments, you can write down any leaks you have had or other problems.

To measure the amount of urine you pass, put a container (like an ice cream container) between your legs in the toilet. Now sit on the toilet and relax, with your feet on the floor. Pass urine into the container. When you have finished, measure the urine by tipping it into a measuring jug. Men may want to stand and pass urine directly into a measuring jug.

Absorbent pads might be used to work out how much urine you leak over one or two days. You can do this by weighing a dry pad in a plastic bag then weighing the wet pad in a plastic bag and taking the weight of the dry pad away from the wet pad. You can see how much you have leaked because each gram equals one millilitre.



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Like this:

Wet pad	400 grams
Dry pad	150 grams
Weight difference	250 grams

Amount leaked = 250 mls

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE CHECK UP?

During the check up, you will be asked about your diet, your weight, your past health and your health now. You may be asked:

- Are you taking any medicines or vitamins? Medicines can make big changes to the way the bladder and bowel work. Make a list of all the medicines you take, not just those the doctor has prescribed.
- How much alcohol or caffeine do you drink? Drinking lots of alcohol or caffeine based drinks like coffee and cola drinks may upset the bladder.
- Are you constipated? Bowel problems can weaken the pelvic floor muscles and can upset the bladder.
- Do you have any “accidents” or leaks from your back passage? Weak pelvic floor muscles can mean you have unplanned loss of wind or bowel motion.
- (If you are a woman) Do you have any children? Pregnancy and having babies can change bladder control.
- (If you are a woman) Are you going through menopause? Hormone changes can make bladder problems worse.

These are some of the tests that could be used for you bladder control check up:

- Physical check, which may include a front and back passage check (if you say this is okay).
- Urine sample may be taken for testing.
- Blood test may be taken for diabetes or prostate problems.
- Urodynamics test is a special check to show how your bladder works.
- Ultrasound check may be done if more needs to be known about how your bladder works.



REMEMBER

No matter what type of test you are asked to have done, you can ask:

- Who will do it?
- How will it be done?
- How will it help?

It is your right to choose whether or not to have any test.

SEEK HELP

If you do nothing it won't go away. And it might get worse.

Every bladder or bowel control problem, no matter how small, needs to be looked after. There is almost always something that can be done to help.

Call Expert Advisors on the National Continence Helpline for free:

- information;
- advice; and
- leaflets.

On FREECALL 1800 33 00 66 (8 am to 8 pm Monday to Friday), or

Visit the website: www.bladderbowel.gov.au

The Helpline is funded under the Commonwealth Government's National Continence Management Strategy and managed by the Continence Foundation of Australia

* Calls from mobile telephones are charged at applicable rates.

