



This brochure will help you get ready for a bladder control check up.

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

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## WHAT ARE YOUR CHOICES?

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Every person has a right to a private and personal check up. Your needs and wishes should be respected. People also have a right to say 'no' to the check up or to any other care.

Choices you have may include:

- You may prefer a man or a woman to do your check up. Ask for this when you make your appointment.
- An interpreter may be available for you. The interpreter could be a man or a woman if you prefer. Check with your health service.
- You can take a family member or friend with you. This might help you feel better about the check up.

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## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE THE CHECK UP?

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You may be asked to keep a bladder diary. You need to keep the diary for at least 3 days before the check up. It keeps track of how your bladder works through the day.

The bladder diary may look like this:

Time	Amount passed	How strong was the urge to go?
6.30am	250mls	4
8.00am	150mls	3
9.00am	100mls	3
10.20am	150mls	1
12.15pm	100mls	1
1.25pm	200mls	3
2.30pm	200mls	3

The bladder diary keeps track of:

- the time you go to the toilet
- how much urine you pass each time
- how strongly you felt the urge to empty each time.

## How do I measure the amount of urine passed?

Put a container (like an ice cream container) in the toilet. Now sit on the toilet and relax with your feet on the floor. Pass urine into the container. Then tip the urine into a jug to measure it. Men may want to stand and pass urine directly into a measuring jug.

## How do I measure urgency?

The chart shows how to use a number to describe the urge you felt.

0	No urgency.	I felt no need to empty. I emptied for other reasons.
1	Mild urgency.	I could put it off as long as needed. I had no fear of wetting myself.
2	Moderate urgency.	I could put it off for a short time. I had no fear of wetting myself.
3	Severe urgency.	I could not put it off. I had to rush to the toilet. I had fear I would wet myself.
4	Urge incontinence.	I leaked before I got to the toilet.

## How do I measure leaking using a Pad Weight Test?

This test helps to work out how much urine you leak over a few days. To do this test you will need some accurate scales for weighing. You do this test by:

1. Weighing a dry pad in a plastic bag before you wear the pad.
2. Then weighing the wet pad in a plastic bag after you wear it.
3. Taking the weight of the dry pad away from the weight of the wet pad.

This will show much you have leaked because each gram equals one ml.

Like this:

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

Amount leaked = 250mls.

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## WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE CHECK UP?

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

You may be asked:

- How is your flow of urine?
- How many times at night are you woken by the need to empty your bladder?
- 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. Note the dose you take and how often you take them. It is a good idea to take all of your medicines with you when you go for the check up.
- How much alcohol or caffeine do you drink? Drinking a lot of alcohol or caffeine-based drinks like coffee, cola or sports drinks may upset the bladder.
- Are you constipated? Constipation can mean straining to open your bowels. This puts a big load onto your pelvic floor muscles. Straining can damage the pelvic floor muscles. Constipation can also upset the bladder.
- Do you have any bowel accidents? Do you leak from your anus (back passage)? Weak pelvic floor muscles could mean you pass wind or bowel motions when you don't mean to.
- Does your bladder problem affect your sex life in any way?

Questions for women only:

- Do you have any children? Pregnancy and having babies can change bladder control.
- Are you going through menopause? Hormone changes can make bladder problems worse.

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## SOME OF THE TESTS THAT COULD BE USED FOR YOUR BLADDER CONTROL CHECK UP INCLUDE:

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- a physical check (if you say this is okay)
- a urine sample may be taken for testing
- a blood test may be taken for diabetes or prostate problems
- an x-ray or ultrasound
- a urodynamic test is a specialist check to show 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?

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## SEEK HELP

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You are not alone. Poor bladder and bowel control can be cured or better managed with the right treatment. If you do nothing, it might get worse.

Phone expert advisors on the National Continence Helpline for free:

- advice
- resources
- information about local services.

1800 33 00 66\* (8am–8pm Monday to Friday AEST)

To arrange for an interpreter through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National), phone 13 14 50 Monday to Friday and ask for the National Continence Helpline.

Information in other languages is also available from [continence.org.au/other-languages](http://continence.org.au/other-languages)

For more information: [continence.org.au](http://continence.org.au), [pelvicfloorfirst.org.au](http://pelvicfloorfirst.org.au), [bladderbowel.gov.au](http://bladderbowel.gov.au)

\* Calls from mobiles are charged at applicable rates.

