

The Continence Center at Women's Medical Specialty

Our practice is proud to offer a much-needed service for our patients, a behavioral continence program. This program is for women with urinary frequency and or bladder or bowel control issues. It offers behavioral interventions such as pelvic muscle re-education or kegels, bladder retraining, stimulation therapy and education for the treatment of incontinence.

According to the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research Guidelines for urinary Incontinence in Adults, "65 to 95 percent of patients using behavioral techniques show significant improvement".

Who suffers from bladder control problems?

Over 13 million American adults suffer with urinary leakage, frequency of urination, or painful urination. It is a very common problem, affecting women of all ages, who often are too embarrassed to talk about it or seek treatment. Bladder control problems often begin after childbirth; however, there are many other risk factors associated with bladder control problems. Some of these factors are medications, smoking, high impact physical activity, pelvic muscle weakness, and drinking certain types of fluids.

What causes urinary/stress incontinence?

The pelvic floor muscles normally fit snugly around the neck of the bladder. These muscles form a ring of muscle that prevents urine from escaping through the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder. However, the pelvic floor muscles can be stretched or torn during childbirth. There may also be loss of muscle tone after menopause due to a thinning of tissues caused by a lack of estrogen. Sudden pressure on the bladder, for example, from coughing or sneezing, can overcome the weakened muscles and cause urine to escape. Incontinence may be caused or made worse by a simple underlying problem that can be corrected, such as constipation, a stone in the bladder, use of diuretics, or thinning of tissue due to lack of estrogen, especially after menopause, which may weaken urethral muscle. Diabetes, obesity, and urinary tract infection also can contribute to stress incontinence.

Different types of bladder control problems

Stress Incontinence is a small amount of leakage when you cough, sneeze, laugh, change position, exercise, or lift heavy objects.

Urge Incontinence is leakage of urine with a strong urge to urinate. Some people also call this an overactive bladder. A good example of urge incontinence is coming home and putting your key in the front door and all of a sudden you get a strong urge to urinate, and then you can't quite make it to the bathroom.

Urinary frequency without urinary leakage. It is normal to urinate approximately 6-8 times during a 24-hour period. Urinary frequency is urinating more than every 2 hours. If you are getting up more than 2 times at night this is not normal. Some patients come in and will say, “I know where every bathroom in town is and I can’t even sit through a movie”.

Seeking help? Most women wait 9 years before seeking treatment. Many individuals are more afraid of the treatment than of living with the problem. Some have even stated “I can’t believe I waited so long to come to see you for this”.

Behavioral treatment offered at The Continence Center – Specially trained nurses and nurse practitioners working with our board certified Obstetrician – Gynecologist, Dr. Larry Kaufman, provide a thorough evaluation and diagnosis of the bladder control problems. Non-surgical treatment services are provided that are based on the federal guidelines on urinary incontinence. Some of these treatment options are education, bladder retraining, pelvic muscle re-education, biofeedback, stimulation therapy, diet modification, and when necessary medication. The average number of visits to the continence center is four to six although the number of visits needed to accomplish your goals is based on your individual symptoms and progress. Most insurance plans cover the services while referrals are required from some HMO plans. Your primary physician is kept informed on your individualized treatment program on a regular basis.

For your convenience, these specialized services are offered in our office located at 2500 English Creek Avenue – Suite 604, Egg Harbor Township. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call us at 609-485-0885, and a member of our staff will be happy to assist you.

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