

# FACT SHEET

## Incontinence

Incontinence is the involuntary loss of urine or faeces. There are different types of incontinence.

### Stress incontinence

This is when you accidentally leak urine or faeces when there is increased intra-abdominal pressure.

#### Common aggravating activities

- > Coughing
- > Sneezing
- > Lifting
- > Running
- > Jumping
- > Standing up from a chair

#### Treatment

Often you will leak because there is a weakness in the pelvic floor muscles, urethra or bladder neck. The evidence shows that pelvic floor strengthening is a successful treatment for stress incontinence and should be trialled prior to any further medical or surgical intervention.

Occasionally we may provide our clients with urethral support devices, ie. Contiform. These can be inserted vaginally and provide support to the urethra which can help to manage their stress incontinence.



### Urge incontinence

This is when you leak urine or faeces when you have an urge to go to the toilet. We should be able to hold on to our bladders and bowels until it is socially appropriate to empty them, however sometimes our bladders and bowels have a mind of their own and start emptying before we're ready. This can cause an enormous amount of embarrassment and social anxiety, and should be addressed straight away.

It is normal to empty your bladder 6-9 times/day and 0-1 times overnight.

It is normal to empty your bowels anywhere from 3 times per day, to every 3rd day.

If you are going to the toilet more than this, and you cannot control your bladder urges, then you likely have urge incontinence.

#### Treatment

- > Pelvic Floor exercises (both strengthening and relaxation)
- > Bladder retraining
- > Bowel retraining
- > Fluid and diet modifications
- > TENs machine to help with bladder overactivity