

How to Manage

Urinary Problems



This guide is for men who have had treatment for prostate cancer. The information here is not meant to replace medical advice. For medical advice, speak to your healthcare team.

Urinary problems are common after treatment for prostate cancer.

This is because:

Surgery can change your urinary system.

Radiation therapy can:

- Irritate your bladder and urethra; and
- Make your prostate gland inflamed or swollen.

Urinary problems can cause:

An intense (strong) need to urinate often

Pain or burning while you pee

A weak urine stream

You to feel like you cannot fully empty your bladder

Talk to your healthcare team if you have any of these problems. They can help you make a plan to manage them.

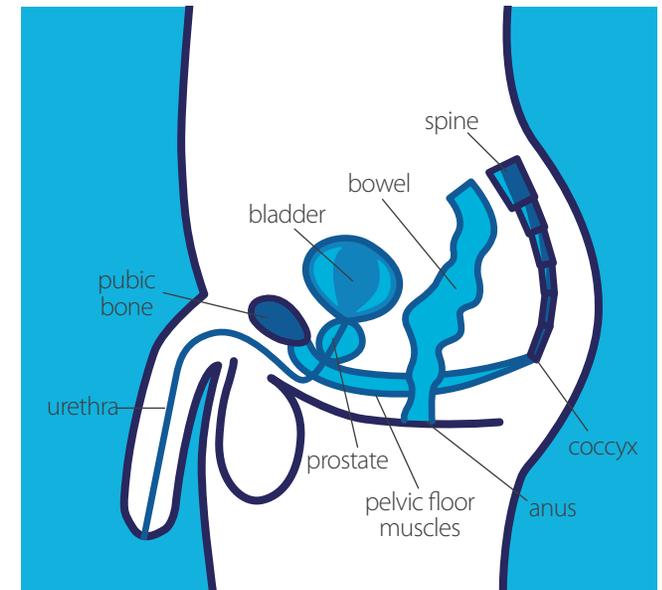
Your healthcare team will try to find the cause of your urinary problems.

You may be asked to:

Keep a journal of when, how often and how much you pee

Get a urine test to check for infection

Have other tests to measure the pressure in your bladder, how much urine your bladder can hold, and the flow of your urine



There are some things that you can do at home to help your urinary problems.



Strengthen your pelvic floor muscles

These muscles help to hold pee inside your body. Strengthening them will help you be able to hold your pee and put off going to the bathroom.

To strengthen your pelvic floor muscles do this exercise:

1. Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles –squeeze the muscles like you are holding in your pee or like you are trying not to pass gas.
2. Hold the squeeze for 10 seconds.
3. Relax for 10 seconds.
4. Repeat these steps 10 times.
5. Do a set of 10 exercises 3 to 5 times a day.

If you need or want help with these exercises, ask your healthcare team for support in your next visit.



Schedule your bathroom breaks

Try to plan trips to the toilet every 2 to 3 hours while you are awake.

As this gets easier, slowly increase the time to every 3-4 hours.



Change your diet

Avoid drinks or food that can irritate your bladder, like:

- Caffeine (in tea, coffee, cola drinks)
- Alcohol
- Citrus fruits and juices
- Drinks with artificial sweeteners
- Tomatoes and tomato-based products
- Spicy foods



Plan your fluids

You may need to plan when you drink your fluids.

For example, if you find that you have to get up in the night to pee, cut back your fluids in the evening.



Take your medication

You may need medications for some of your urinary problems.

Medications can help to:

Relax the muscles around your bladder to make it easier to empty fully.

Reduce your bladder irritation and make it easier to control how often you have to pee.

Treat an infection

For more information visit the sites below:

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Website: www.prostate.org.au

Search term: "Understanding urinary problems"

Prostate Cancer Canada

Website: www.prostatecancer.ca

Search term: "Managing urinary difficulties"