



Men After Prostate Surgery

LIFESTYLE ADVICE LEAFLET

For men taking part in the MAPS Study

Please take time to read this information leaflet and discuss it with your family and friends if you wish. Do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything you do not understand or if you would like more information.

Lifestyle advice

Leaking urine is quite common after prostate surgery but usually gets better with time. It is affected by many sorts of daily activities. This leaflet contains suggestions for things you could do for yourself which may help you get better faster. Even small changes may make your urine symptoms better.

What you drink

It is important to drink enough each day. If you do not drink enough, it makes your urine too concentrated. This could make bladder problems worse or cause a urine infection. Try to drink at least six cups or glasses of fluid during the day. Drinking less in the evening may reduce the number of times you urinate at night.

Some people find that drinking cranberry juice helps bladder problems. However, if you are taking warfarin you should not drink cranberry juice.

Caffeine

Sometimes bladder problems are made worse by caffeine (for example in coffee, tea and cola drinks). Try reducing your caffeine intake gradually over three weeks. You could drink water, decaffeinated coffee, decaffeinated tea, herb tea, fruit juice or milk instead.

What you eat

Eating a balanced diet is important, including five helpings of fruit or vegetables a day. Being overweight can put extra pressure on the bladder. If you are overweight, think about going on a weight reducing diet. Try to avoid foods that contain lots of fat or sugar.

Constipation

Constipation may make incontinence worse. Straining to empty your bowel may weaken the muscles which hold the bladder closed. You can help prevent constipation by eating some food that contains fibre every day – such as fruit and vegetables, wholemeal bread or brown rice.

Fitness

Try to take regular exercise and keep as active and mobile as you can. Regular exercise can include walking, using the stairs, swimming, cycling or gardening. Drink extra fluids if you exercise a lot. Taking extra exercise may also help you to lose weight if you are overweight.

Heavy lifting

Incorrect or heavy lifting can weaken the muscles which hold the bladder closed. Try to avoid it if you can, or be careful how you lift. If you cannot avoid heavy lifting, try to lift less often or for shorter periods of time. Think about what you could do – can you lift two lighter loads rather than one heavy one?

Chest problems

Coughing can cause you to leak urine by putting extra strain on the muscles which keep the bladder closed. If you smoke or have chest problems, you are more likely to cough or have chest infections. Try to reduce or stop smoking. If you have asthma, bronchitis or hay fever, you should ensure you are taking the correct treatment. You could ask your doctor to make sure that your treatment is up to date.

Urine infections

Sometimes a urine infection can make bladder problems worse.

Symptoms of a urine infection are:

- pain or burning while urinating
- fever or chills
- the urine becomes dark, cloudy, blood-stained or begins to smell, or
- you suddenly start urinating more often than normal for you or in smaller amounts

If you think you might have a urine infection, you should tell your GP, who will test your urine and may give you an antibiotic.

Thank you for reading this

Your notes:

MAPS Study Office
Health Services Research Unit
University of Aberdeen
Polwarth Building, Foresterhill
Aberdeen, AB25 2ZD

Tel: 01224 551103
Fax: 01224 554580
Email: maps@abdn.ac.uk

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