



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust



Building healthier lives

UHB is a no smoking Trust

It is the temptation of every person with a bladder problem to restrict fluid intake in the hope that less fluid means fewer visits to the toilet and/or episodes of leakage. Unfortunately, this is not the case and fluid restriction may actually be counter-productive. By producing less urine the bladder is seldom stretched to normal or full capacity, making it more sensitive to lower amounts. Urine produced is also more concentrated, which can also make bladder problems worse.

However, it is also true that the more that goes in, then the more there is to come out. Fluid consumption should therefore be moderate unless there is a urinary tract infection, in which case, fluid intake should be increased.

It is important to find a balance. Therefore it is recommended 1500–2000mls fluid per day is drunk, i.e. 8–10 mug-sized drinks per day. If you drink less then try to increase the amount you drink gradually. Drink at regular intervals throughout the day.

It is best not to drink too many caffeine-related drinks, as caffeine is a bladder irritant and stimulant with a urine producing effect. Caffeine occurs naturally in tea and coffee but also appears in other drinks such as cola drinks, Lucozade, chocolate and many slimming preparations. Alcoholic drinks can irritate the bladder too.

Caffeine-related drinks however should be reduced slowly in order to prevent withdrawal symptoms such as headaches and drowsiness.

Drink plain water, squash/cordial, fruit or herbal tea but avoid blackcurrant. If you pay attention to what you drink, you will notice which drinks cause problems. (General rule: only 1/3 of your daily total fluid intake should include bladder-irritating drinks).

Drinking one or two small glasses (do not drink in excess as this may cause kidney stones) of cranberry juice every day can help people who often get urine infections, although diabetics should check with their doctor first.

The acid in fruit juices can make problems worse for some people. Check with your doctor or continence nurse specialist if you are unsure.

It may also be beneficial to take care with your diet. Certain foods, such as citrus fruits and tomatoes, can make your symptoms worse.

To check you are drinking sufficient amounts check the colour of your urine. It should be pale yellow and clear. If your urine is dark, drink more. Water is the best fluid to drink.

Normal fluid intake should be increased during hot weather, with strenuous activity and when eating salty foods.



Do you really need to go to A&E?
Check symptoms online quickly and safely.
A **free** service for NHS patients.
uhb.nhs.uk/ask

Urology

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston
Birmingham, B15 2GW
Telephone: 0121 371 6931
