

GET TO KNOW YOUR BLADDER

Although it's only about the size of a pear (when empty), it can sometimes feel like your bladder controls your life. Check out our experts' tips for keeping your bladder healthy and reducing some of those pesky problems.

ALWAYS GOTTA GO?

Certain foods and beverages can cause bladder irritation and make you feel like you have to urinate more frequently. Try to avoid the following, and drink more water to help flush out irritants:



INCONTINENCE: A COMMON CONCERN

Many women experience urinary incontinence, especially after having children or as they age. Stress incontinence is when a woman laughs, coughs or sneezes, and then leaks. Urge incontinence, or overactive bladder, usually occurs when there is a need to go to the bathroom (urgency), but due to a lack of bladder control, the person can't make it in time. "There are many effective treatments for urinary incontinence, ranging from pelvic floor physical therapy to medication or surgery," says **David Waggoner, MD**, a Park Nicollet urogynecologist.

RED ALERT

Blood in your urine could signal anything from irritation to kidney stones to cancer, so if you see it, call your clinic for an evaluation.

HEALTH TIP

"Since dehydration can cause bladder irritation, make sure you drink enough water – your urine should be close to clear. And be sure to urinate on a regular basis," says **Jocelyn Rieder, MD**, a Park Nicollet urologist. "Holding urine for a long time can cause the bladder muscle to weaken and can lead to other bladder issues."

THE BLADDER-SEX CONNECTION

You might not think of sex and your bladder as having anything in common, but bladder issues can cause problems in the bedroom. "For both women and men, bladder leakage can impact their sex lives as people are often embarrassed about this issue and steer away from being intimate," says **Tricia Zubert, NP**, a Park Nicollet Sexual Health Clinic nurse practitioner. "For women, if the bladder is poorly supported by the ligaments or pelvic floor muscles, it can cause pain with sexual activity."

DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE!

From urinary incontinence to UTIs and more, Park Nicollet's experienced Urology, Urogynecology and Sexual Health clinicians can help. Visit parknicollet.com to learn more.