



# Diet and Bladder Control

YOUR KAISER PERMANENTE CARE INSTRUCTIONS

## Should I drink less fluid to help control my bladder?

No, this is not healthy to do. Many people with bladder control problems will drink less fluid hoping that they will need to urinate less often or have less urinary leakage.

Drinking less will make you pass a smaller amount of concentrated urine that has a dark-yellow color. Dark-yellow urine irritates the bladder and may actually cause you to go to the bathroom more often. It also aids the growth of bacteria, which may lead to infections resulting in bladder control problems.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

Drink plenty of water or other drinks that do not have alcohol. This will help flush out bacteria from your bladder and urethra (the tube that connects your bladder to the outside of your body). If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.

## What kind of diet changes should I try?

Take out the following irritants from your diet. Slowly re-introduce them one by one to see if they make you want to urinate more.

### Bladder irritants:

- Additives such as coffee creamers, some salad dressings, etc.
- All caffeine
- Artificial sweeteners such as Splenda, Equal, Sweet and Low, aspartame, Crystal Light
- Beer, wine, alcohol
- Black tea
- Carbonated drinks
- Chilies, spicy foods
- Chocolate
- Citrus fruits such as lemon, limes, grapefruit, and oranges
- Coffee
- Cranberries
- Green tea
- Peppermint tea
- Pineapple
- Soda
- Strawberries
- Tomatoes
- Vinegar

## These foods and drinks should be less irritating to you:

- Stevia, honey, molasses, Sucanat sweetener
- Low acid fruits: Pears, apricots, papaya, and watermelon
- Juices: Grape and apple
- For coffee drinkers: Postum and Pero
- For tea drinkers: Non-citrus herbal tea

## Prevent constipation

Eat high-fiber foods like low-acid fruits, vegetables, cooked dry beans, and whole grains. Try a simple mix of: cup oat bran, 1 cup applesauce, 1/4- 1/2 cup prune juice. Mix together, then store in refrigerator. Take 1-2 tbsp/day in a little water or juice. Other suggestions to help ease constipation include:

- **Getting at least 30 minutes of exercise most days** such as walking, running, swimming, cycling, or playing tennis or team sports.
- **Taking a fiber supplement** such as Citrucel or Metamucil, every day if needed. Start with a small dose and very slowly increase the dose over a month or more.
- **Scheduling time each day for a bowel movement.** Take your time and do not strain when having your bowel movement.

## When should I call Kaiser Permanente?

Call your doctor if you have:

- Blood or pus in your urine.
- Pain in your back just below your rib cage. This is called flank pain.
- A fever, chills, or body aches.
- Painful urination.
- Groin or belly pain.

## Resources

Go to [kp.org](http://kp.org) and type "bladder control" into the search box.