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# INCONTINENCE

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## definition

The lack of control over urination or defecation, either caused by a physical stress on the body (stress incontinence) or an overwhelming urge to use the bathroom (urge incontinence). Incontinence occurs in about 1/3 of people, of all ages.

## symptoms

Any involuntary leakage - either urinary or fecal - defines incontinence. It can occur with physical exercise, laughing, coughing or sneezing, or with the powerful urge to go before you can reach a bathroom. It can also be an intermittent leakage through the day.

## diagnosis

Incontinence is often related to changes that affect the pelvic floor. These can include childbirth (either a vaginal or C-section delivery), hormonal changes, low back pain, or constipation.

## PT

The pelvic floor is responsible for controlling the bladder and bowels, holding tight all day to keep us continent and then relaxing in order to void; incontinence is an inability of the pelvic floor to perform its function.



*pelvic floor physical therapy is the most proven treatment for incontinence.*

Pelvic floor physical therapy is the most proven treatment for incontinence, but it's so much more than 'just Kegel.' Much of treatment is re-training the entire core system responsible for continence, improving posture, and behavioral adjustments.

These changes can make a huge difference in incontinence symptoms, even after just a few visits!

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## *multi-disciplinary approach*

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PATIENTS ALWAYS BENEFIT FROM A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN ADDITION TO PHYSICAL THERAPY. THIS CAN INCLUDE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

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Often incontinence can be influenced by diet; avoiding bladder irritants can reduce symptoms while pelvic PT addresses the underlying issue.

### DIET & NUTRITION

Bladder re-training can reduce the urge to go by having a planned voiding time, gradually increasing the amount of time between voids.

### BEHAVIORAL TRAINING

Acupuncture has been shown to reduce incontinence symptoms for some patients, and supplements may support bladder health.

### ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

Lowering stress levels with gentle exercise, meditation, yoga, or deep breathing can reverse nervous system upregulation and bladder/bowel irritation..

### STRESS RELIEF

Many women notice incontinence begins after a change in hormones, and decreased estrogen can inhibit pelvic floor function.

### HORMONE THERAPY

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## *additional resources*

[www.PelvicSanity.com/incontinence](http://www.PelvicSanity.com/incontinence)

Finding Pelvic Sanity Online Support Group ([www.Facebook.com/groups/FindingPelvicSanity](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/FindingPelvicSanity))

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