3 Exercises to Help Strengthen Your Overactive Bladder

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Exercises for Overactive Bladder

Overactive bladder (OAB) is one of the most common, yet least discussed, conditions we as humans have. It can be embarrassing, frustrating and heartbreaking all in one, and it all comes down to bladder control, something that is so innate and so imperative to have.

When our bladder does not allow us to have that control, we can find ways to train it and strengthen it to make washroom visits a little less stressful.

This condition affects a huge number of North Americans. About one in seven adults are affected by the symptoms of OAB on a daily basis. If everyone talked about it like it was the common cold, then there would be less of a stigma and stereotype that surrounds it.

OAB can be – but is not exclusively — a recurring event in a person's life, as well as can affect anyone young or old. OAB is more common the older you get, but it is not a normal part of the aging process. Wherever you are in your life struggling with OAB, there is help.

Bladder Strength and Overactive Bladder

The bladder is completely made up of muscles that make it contract and relax. Just like any muscle in the body, the bladder can lose strength and become weaker. Even though we use our bladder every day, does not mean it is functioning correctly nor is it very strong.

OAB can occur for numerous reasons, along with some unknown ones, and sometimes retraining your bladder and learning new habits is what your physician may recommend.

There are many movements and activities you do every day that require your pelvic muscles to work without you even knowing. Therefore, you may accidentally leak when you stand up or sit down, among other movements.

For example, if your pelvic floor is not very strong, then you are likely to suffer from stress incontinence. Leaking may be the norm for you, but it is not meant to be normal. Your body is telling you it needs help.

1. Exercising Your Bladder

Some common exercises for your bladder are referred to as Kegel exercises. They are small "lift and release" exercises to help regain strength with controlling your ability to hold and pass urine.

To find your Kegel muscles, pretend like you are about to stop the flow of urine, and those are your pelvic floor or Kegel muscles.

It’s recommended to do Kegels every day, numerous times a day. However small of an exercise can be a difficult thing to remember.

Kegels can be performed men and women alike of any age. Try putting it with other activities like sitting in traffic, or every time you answer the phone or respond to an email.

Whatever you can do to remind yourself to do some Kegels is a good thing, as it will take time to incorporate them and see their effects.

2. Wear Proper Footwear and Go for Walks

A basic activity such as walking is so important to our overall health. Even the kind of footwear you wear is super important.

Wearing heels or trainers force your body to compensate in ways that affect your natural alignment. Having to walk with this forward pressure causes our bottoms to stay tucked under and our knees to take the brunt of the stress of trying to stay upright.

Minimize the amount of time wearing high heels and walk more often in flat or minimal shoes. Even going barefoot when you can benefit you. If you wear heels every day, you will notice a difference in your pelvic floor strength and function by following these rules. Your pelvic floor and core will thank you.

You can also try and increase your walk time by parking farther back in a parking lot, or take 10 to 20 minutes a day set aside for active walking.

3. Taking Time to Squat

No one likes squats, so we typically try to avoid them at all costs. However, they do provide an immense benefit to our core and to our pelvic floor. Each squat you do engages the largest muscles in the body, which is why it hurts so much after leg day.

If you cannot find time to do 20 reps of squats a day, you may want to try and slowly incorporate them into your daily life.

A squat is performed by standing with your feet at least shoulder width apart, toes pointing outward and bending at the knees, crouching down as if you were about to sit in a chair with your thighs parallel to the ground.

Going throughout your day, try to perform these in wherever you are. If you have a sitting job, perform them beside your desk. Start small with only five. If you are at a standing job, find a quiet place, perhaps even in the washroom, and do five squats.

You can even do them in the elevator on your way to work while leaving your apartment or at your workplace. Try doing them multiple times a day during a typically boring activity and it may become a habit.

Conclusion

Exercises for overactive bladder is not always easy to start doing and to maintain long-term. We must find ways to make it work for us because these activities are extremely beneficial. OAB is not an easy condition to consistently battle.

Every little thing that we can do for ourselves is important. It will help us in the long run when things like medication or procedures aren’t helping the symptoms of OAB.

Using tips and tricks like these will only make us more knowledgeable and empowered enough to do them. No one expects you to be perfect, but if we try to change one thing a day, or even a week, we will be better off

tomorrow.