

Leaky bladder? Learn more about stress incontinence and treatments available at Benenden Hospital's free Promoting Continence for Women webinar

If you find yourself suffering from frequent leaks when you laugh, sneeze or exercise, then you are not alone.

There are around 14 million people in the UK today with some form of bladder problem – this is more than those with asthma, diabetes and epilepsy put together. Bladder problems affect one in three women and one in five men.

What are the symptoms of bladder problems?

Feeling a sudden hard-to-resist urge to go to the toilet can be a sign of an overactive bladder. Some people leak before they reach the bathroom or need to go more than seven times a day and frequently through the night. Others have [stress urinary incontinence](#) – leaking when they laugh, sneeze, cough or exercise.

What causes bladder problems?

In women, the urethra or tube carrying urine from the bladder is shorter and more prone to leaks. [Stress incontinence](#) can affect women after childbirth, because of extra strain on the pelvis or childbirth problems. Either can weaken the pelvic floor muscles which hold the bladder and bowel in place and help to stop leaks. Some women also develop stress incontinence after menopause, as hormone changes weaken the pelvic floor.

Jan Chaseley, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Continence Care at our Outstanding rated Benenden Hospital, says bladder problems can often be easily treated. Jan, along with her expert team of nurses, treat stress incontinence, overactive bladder syndrome, prolapse and many other bladder issues, but bladder problems should never be viewed as a normal part of ageing.

Men can also develop stress incontinence after surgery for prostate cancer. As they age, and the prostate which surrounds the urethra grows, they may also have difficulty emptying their bladder fully.

When should you ask for support?

When bladder problems affect people's lives and it becomes difficult for them to enjoy the theatre, undertake long journeys, or go on holidays, it's time to ask for help.

Urinary incontinence causes huge embarrassment and inconvenience but there are often simple measures which can help.

Join our Consultant Gynaecologist, [Mr Abhishek Gupta](#) and our Continence Care Nurse, Jan Chaseley for our Promoting Continence for Women webinar on 6 October at 7pm. Find out how to gain control of your bladder with self-pay treatments and the support that is available to you. You can register [here](#).

If you have any questions regarding and the different options available, contact us using [our online enquiry form](#) or by calling our Private Patient Team on **01580 363158**.