

GOOD BLADDER HYGEINE

Tips for good bladder health and preventing urinary tract infections.

1. **Timed voids.** Urinate at least every three to four hours. Stagnant urine in the bladder allows bacteria time to multiply and puts you at risk for urinary tract infection.
2. **Double void.** Before leaving the restroom, try to empty your bladder a second time. Make time to use the restroom so you are not rushed. Focus on relaxing the muscles of the pelvic floor. Try different placement of the feet to position yourself to empty the bladder as much as possible. You may try running your hands under warm water before your second void to trigger a relaxation response.
3. **Drink plenty of fluids.** Fluids keep the urinary tract clean. The act of urination helps flush away bacteria that could otherwise cause infection.
4. **Have a bowel movement every day.** The rectum is just behind the bladder and a rectum full of stool can keep the bladder from functioning properly. Increase your fruit, fiber water and walking until you have soft bowel movements and don't have to strain. If this is not enough, add over the counter senna (Sennakot, SennaGen) 8.6mg, one to two tabs twice daily. If still not enough, add over the counter dulcolax suppository 10mg daily per rectum.
5. **Wipe front to back.** The bacteria that causes urinary tract infection usually come from the rectal flora (bacteria in the stool). Wiping front to back keeps bacteria away from the bladder. Wiping back to front drags bacteria toward the bladder and puts you at risk for urinary tract infections.
6. **Void before and after intercourse.** This will flush away bacteria that could put you at risk for infection. This is particularly important for women whose infections are related to intercourse.