



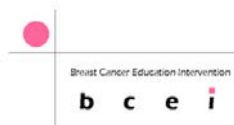
URINARY CHANGES

For some women the menopausal changes (also called the change of life, which can be caused by chemotherapy) that occur as the body's response to the lower amounts of female hormones include urinary changes. These changes may include the urge to void often and urinary infections. If you are having urinary changes, here are a few tips that may help you:

- **Drink lots of liquids.** Try to drink at least 8-10 (64-80 ounces) glasses of liquids each day.
- **Keep track** of your voiding patterns if you notice any changes.
- **Try to void with a schedule.** Do not hold urine over long periods of time, and be sure to go to the bathroom at least every 2 hours.
- **If you are having urine leak** keep small female pads handy.
- **Avoid caffeine and alcohol** since they can irritate the bladder.
- **Avoid foods with red dyes** which also irritate the bladder.

Try Kegel Exercises:

- **Practice pelvic muscle exercises** called Kegels (not just for pregnancy!). Kegels prevent drop of the pelvic organs by strengthening the muscles of the pelvic floor. This can help prevent leaking urine when you sneeze or cough.
- **Kegel muscles are attached to the pelvic bone** and act like a hammock, holding in your pelvic organs. To try and isolate these muscles try stopping and starting the flow of urine.
- **Once you have located the muscles** simply tighten and relax the muscle over and over, about 20 times a day or for 5 minutes twice a day. These are basic kegels.
- **There are many kinds of kegels:** elevator kegels (where you tighten slowly, going in and out, like an elevator stopping on several floors); you can hold the muscle tight for five seconds, you can bulge the muscles out at the end.



Copyright © 2016 BCEI

Used with the permission of the Young Breast Cancer Survivorship Network



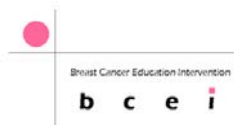
URINARY CHANGES

When Do You Need to Seek Help?

If you are going to the bathroom more often, or having pain, burning, or urgency during voiding, check to see if you have a fever. Also note the color of your urine, and call your doctor or nurse as soon as you can. You may have a bladder infection (also called a urinary tract infection or UTI).

Useful websites:

- <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/womens-health/in-depth/kegel-exercises/art-20045283>



Copyright © 2016 BCEI

Used with the permission of the Young Breast Cancer Survivorship Network