

By Robert Pugach, M.D.



Bladder Control: What You Should Know

Abnormal bladder control (incontinence) is a condition that affects more than 30 million Americans. However, for many women, urinary incontinence can be a secret shame – an embarrassment that happens either frequently or every once in a while. If you or a loved one is living with a bladder control problem, you know the symptoms – leakage when coughing or sneezing or when you are physically active, frequent or sudden urges to use a bathroom or, in its worst and most embarrassing form, leakage before you get there.

There are many causes for bladder control problems. They include childbirth, changes in hormone levels as you get older, medical conditions like diabetes or a stroke and back problems like a herniated disk. Perhaps the most important part to getting relief from your bladder control problem is to understand that it should not be considered a normal part of getting older.

Most women never tell their doctor about bladder control prob-

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lems. Many women "treat" this condition by using pads to cover up the leakage. Often, people with bladder control problems end up limiting the activities they enjoy because of embarrassment.

There is no need to do that. There are many new, simple minimally invasive or non-invasive treatments available. Simply defined, a minimally invasive medical treatment is one that is designed to have the smallest impact your body or skin (unlike an invasive surgical procedure that requires hospitalization and a larger opening of your body).

From new medications to advanced biofeedback exercises taught in a doctor's office to simple outpatient surgical procedures, there is an answer for most women that can help and do not require an invasive procedure. **HB**

Dr. Pugach has been recognized as one of America's Top Physicians for three years in a row. For more than 18 years, Dr. Pugach has pioneered many advances in the treatment of urologic problems including innovations in minimally invasive procedures. The Pacific Coast Urology Medical Center staff is dedicated to improving your quality of life and we offer a range of treatments in the comfort and convenience of our offices in Huntington Harbour and Los Alamitos. To schedule and appointment or learn more Pacific Coast Urology Medical Center, call our office at 714-846-7275. Please visit our Website www.pacificcoasturology.com.

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of the fingers.

Diagnosis begins with a history and physical exam, and frequently includes electrodiagnostic studies (such as an electromyogram). Treatment can range from a splint or oral medications to steroid injections, and as a last resort, surgery. **HB**

A graduate of New York Medical College who completed her postgraduate neurology training at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Lin Garcia, MD is the newest consulting physician at Huntington Harbour Medical Center and is available by appointment at 16843 Algonquin (in the Huntington Harbour Mall) by phone (714)-846-6516 or visit www.harbourdocs.com



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