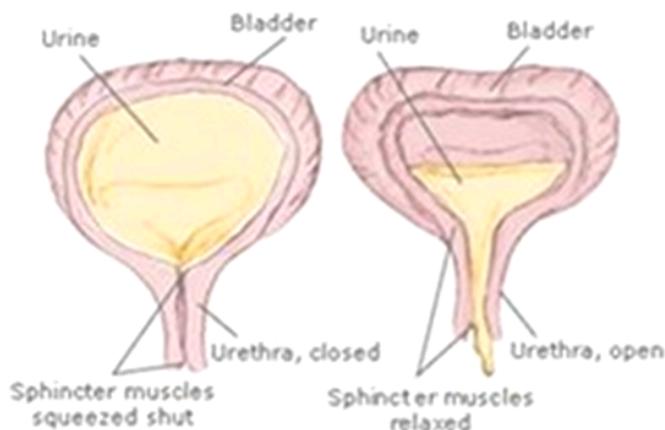


Bladder Emptying

Problems with bladder control, or urinary leaking, may be caused by conditions that keep the bladder from emptying completely. When urination occurs, some urine may stay in the bladder. This remaining urine can cause you to feel *more urgency* and the need to urinate more often. Not fully emptying your bladder can also increase your risk of a *urinary tract or bladder infection*.



One reason that many people do not completely empty their bladder is the muscles that hold the bladder closed *do not completely relax* during bladder emptying. This is called **dysfunctional voiding**.

In physical therapy, you are learning how to control your pelvic floor muscles by contracting and relaxing these muscles. You need to practice this daily so that when you go to empty your bladder, you can focus on the sensation of releasing these muscles rather than contracting them.

What You Can Do to Help Your Bladder Empty:

- Empty your bladder in a relaxed and private place. Worry and tension can make bladder emptying harder.
- Women should sit comfortably on the toilet seat and relax the pelvic floor muscle to void. Men can stand, but if it seems hard to urinate fully when standing, then men can sit.
- Do not push down on your bladder with your stomach to help urinate. Try your best to not “strain”. Allow your pelvic muscle to relax and release.
- Remember that taking several deep breaths can help to release tension in the pelvic floor muscles.
- Once you’ve stopped urinating, stand up, sit back down, lean forward and try to void again.