

Center for Women's Wellness

Continence Care Program

Our office provides comprehensive gynecological services to the community. Patients are referred by their health care providers for Urodynamics studies and/or bladder training and biofeedback. In addition, patients without a referral can be seen by one of the healthcare professionals for assessment and assistance with urinary incontinence.

What is Urodynamics?

Urodynamics refers to a series of diagnostic tests that evaluate the function of the bladder and urethra. These tests may be recommended if you have urinary incontinence (leakage of urine), recurrent bladder infections, slow or weak urinary stream, incomplete bladder emptying, or frequent urination. These tests provide important information in order for your provider to accurately diagnose and treat your bladder problems appropriately.

How to prepare for Urodynamics

Prior to your appointment you will be mailed a voiding diary to complete. Please bring this with you to the appointment. At the beginning of the test you will be asked to urinate so please arrive for the study with a relatively full bladder. You may eat or drink anything prior to the study. Take your medications as normally scheduled, unless otherwise directed by your health care provider. The tests typically take about an hour and are generally painless; no anesthesia is necessary. Your friends and family are welcome to accompany you but will be asked to remain in the waiting area. You will be able to resume all previous activities, including driving, at the completion of the Urodynamics studies. A catheter (soft, hollow tube) or special sensor will be carefully placed in your urethra and vagina or rectum to perform the study. Your health care provider will decide which of the following tests need to be performed to help diagnose and treat your condition.

Uroflow

This test measures the speed and amount of urine you void. You should come to the test feeling as though you need to urinate. Try not to empty your bladder for one hour before your test. You will be asked to urinate into a commode with a funnel attached to a computer that measures your urine flow.

Cystometrogram

This study evaluates how your bladder holds urine, measures your bladder capacity, and also determines how well you can control your bladder. Through a catheter your bladder is filled with fluid. In order to reproduce your bladder symptoms, you should report any sensations you feel during the study. In addition, you may be asked to cough, bear down, stand, or walk in place during the test. At the end of the study, you will be asked to urinate.

EMG

This test measures how well you can control your sphincter (outlet) muscles and determines if they are working in coordination with your bladder. Electrodes may be placed near the rectum to record muscle activity. This is painless.

Pressure Flow Study

This test determines if there is an obstruction. After your bladder is filled through a catheter, you will be asked to urinate as you normally would. This test may be done sitting on a commode or standing. The study simultaneously records the bladder pressure and urine flow rate.

Biofeedback/Pelvic Floor-Muscle Exercise Therapy

Depending on the results of your urodynamics study, we may recommend biofeedback and pelvic floor-muscle exercise therapy. This non-surgical therapy is used to treat incontinence and other pelvic floor problems. A healthcare provider will educate, evaluate, and instruct you on proper isolation and exercise of your pelvic floor muscles for bladder control. Using biofeedback technology, a computer recorder monitors your progress and strength of pelvic muscles. Typically this therapy consists of weekly sessions for six weeks. The first session will last about one hour while the remaining sessions will last less than an hour.

How to make an appointment

Your health care provider will determine what type of Urodynamics studies you will need.

You should arrive 20 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment in order to register.

If you have any additional questions please call your healthcare provider's office.

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Your Appointment:

Center for Women's Health and Wellness
Continence Care Center
Patient Information Guide to Biofeedback Therapy

Continence Care

Our office provides comprehensive continence assessment and treatment to the community. Patients may be referred by their health care providers for bladder training and biofeedback, and/or Urodynamics testing. In addition, patients without a referral can be seen for assessment and assistance with urinary incontinence.

What is Biofeedback?

This conservative, non-surgical therapy is used to treat incontinence, urgency, and pelvic pain, and to re-educate the pelvic floor muscles to restore and maintain health. A health care professional will educate, evaluate, and instruct you on proper isolation and exercise of your pelvic floor muscles.

Often people attempt to exercise the pelvic floor by performing Kegel exercises, but do not realize that they are performing these exercises improperly, and therefore are not making progress. With the guidance of trained healthcare professionals, biofeedback offers clear reinforcement of the accuracy and effectiveness of muscle exercises to obtain optimal results.

Biofeedback /Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercise Therapy

Using biofeedback technology, a computer monitors the strength of your pelvic muscles and your progress throughout the therapy. This technology allows you to immediately see the results as you contract and relax the correct group of muscles according to a preset pattern of exercises. Think of this as your personal trainer while you "do a circuit" of exercises just as they do for other muscles in the fitness centers. You will learn skills that will enable you to continue maintaining pelvic floor health throughout your life.

Electrical Stimulation During Biofeedback Therapy

Your health care provider may decide that your pelvic floor muscles could benefit from an extra boost of exercise which can be provided by directly stimulating these muscles. A very mild electrical stimulation causes the muscles to contract without your direct effort. Many people also report this offers a sensation that guides them in identifying the correct muscles to contract. This stimulation often is described as a tingling sensation (this is not painful) and is always adjusted to your specific comfort.

What to Expect During Biofeedback Therapy

With each visit, you will consult with your healthcare professional about your progress and discuss your therapy regimen. Typically this therapy consists of weekly sessions for six weeks. The first session will last about one hour while the remaining sessions will last less than an hour.

A small medical device called a probe may be inserted vaginally or rectally to allow direct assessment of the pelvic floor muscles. Adhesive patches may be placed on your abdominal muscles so that you can be assured that only the desired muscles contract while exercising.

The probe and the patches will be cleaned and re-used for each therapy session. You may be asked to keep them and bring them with you each time you visit. It is important to always have these with you for your appointments.

How to make an appointment

Your health care provider will determine what type of pelvic floor therapy you will need. Plan to stay one hour for your first appointment. It is a good idea to wear comfortable clothing to your therapy sessions, and if you use pads or absorbent products please bring a replacement with you. If you have any additional questions please call your health care provider's office. You will receive homework assignments to continue your new exercises at home. You will be asked to keep a record of your bladder habits.

	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No	S	M	L	Yes	No		Yes	No

Pad Use: Panty Liner Pad Brief Other _____ Dampness: Damp Wet Soaking Number per Day _____

Adopted from form from Pharmacia Corporation

In the second column following the time slots, record what fluids you drink and how much. The next columns address your urinary patterns. Next record any episodes of pelvic pain for discomfort. Record every time you urinate and estimate how much using small, moderate or large as choices. Circle if you dribbled on the way to the toilet and the presence of any urgency. The last column in this white section, addresses what activity was interrupted with the need to urinate. The 3 final columns address any leaking. Indicate whether it is stool or urine but circling the answer if urine, and draw a square around if stool. Estimate how much urine you leaked and what you were doing at the time. This diary should be recorded on three consecutive days and before the initiation of any treatment. This is often very helpful. You may be asked to repeat this later in your program.