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## GLOSSARY

**Bladder** A hollow sac of muscle and connective tissue. The bladder stores urine produced by the kidneys. Normally, the muscles in the bladder remain relaxed while the bladder is filling. They contract during intentional urination, pushing urine out of the bladder.<sup>1</sup>

**Bladder Training** Scheduling trips to the bathroom to urinate. The training gradually increases the length of time between bathroom trips. Bladder training can help improve bladder control when practiced over time.<sup>13</sup>

**Canadian Continence Foundation, The** A national non-profit organization serving the interest of people experiencing incontinence. The Canadian Continence Foundation (TCCF) is supported by donations from the public, healthcare professionals and private industry. The CCF can be reached at 1-800-265-9575, or on the Internet at [www.continence-fdn.ca](http://www.continence-fdn.ca).

**Continence** Voluntary control over natural impulses, such as the urge to defecate or urinate.<sup>24</sup>

**Coping Mechanisms** Habits that some people with Overactive Bladder develop to cope with their condition. These may include toilet mapping, wearing dark and/or loose clothing, avoiding places where the location of the bathroom is unknown, avoiding sexual activity, and avoiding crowded places, (such as movie theatres), where it may be difficult to get to the bathroom on time.

**Detrusor muscle** Part of the bladder. This large bladder muscle is normally relaxed during filling, and contracts only during intentional urination.<sup>24</sup>

**Frequency** The number of times you go to the bathroom per day.<sup>4</sup> Voiding eight (8) or more times in 24 hours is considered abnormal frequency.

**Incontinence (urinary)** A lack of control over when urination occurs, resulting in involuntary leakage of urine.<sup>4,24</sup> Two of the most common kinds of urinary incontinence are urge urinary incontinence and stress urinary incontinence.

**Incontinence pads** Absorbent pads that are used to absorb urinary leakage. A variety of incontinence pads are available, including minipads, briefs and complete undergarments.

**Kegel Exercises** Exercises designed to strengthen the muscles around the bladder and the urethra.<sup>13</sup> These exercises are commonly called "Kegel" exercises, after the doctor who developed them.<sup>13</sup> These moves involve repeated contractions of the specific pelvic floor muscles surrounding the urethra and bladder.

**Kidney** An organ in the abdominal cavity. The kidney filters waste from the blood to produce urine.<sup>24</sup>

**Large Bladder Muscle** (detrusor) Part of the bladder. The large bladder muscle is normally relaxed during filling, and contracts only during intentional urination.<sup>24</sup>

**Micturition** To urinate.<sup>24</sup>

**Mixed Urinary Incontinence** A combination of the symptoms of both urge and stress urinary incontinence.<sup>4</sup>

**Nocturia** Waking two or more times at night to urinate.<sup>4</sup>

**Overactive Bladder** A condition identified by an urgent need to urinate, usually accompanied by urinary frequency and nocturia. It may occur with or without urge incontinence.<sup>4</sup> Overactive Bladder is usually due to the over activity of the detrusor muscle.<sup>4</sup>

**Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises** Also known as Kegel exercises, these moves involve repeated contractions of the specific pelvic floor muscles surrounding the urethra and bladder.<sup>13</sup>

**Polyuria** Frequent urination in large amounts. This can result from drinking excessive amounts of fluids and is often a symptom associated with diabetes.<sup>8</sup>

**Quality of Life** The term used to describe an individual's satisfaction with his or her life and general sense of well-being. It is often measured as physical, psychological and social well-being.<sup>25</sup>

**Stress Urinary Incontinence** Involuntary leakage during effort or exertion.<sup>4</sup> It occurs due to abdominal pressure on the bladder with everyday physical stresses such as laughing, coughing or jumping.<sup>4</sup> Usually only a small volume of urine is leaked.

**Toilet Mapping** Immediately looking for the nearest bathroom before activities or outings. People who engage in toilet mapping often feel uncomfortable if they do not know where the bathroom is.

**Urethra** The canal through which urine is discharged from the bladder.<sup>24</sup> Muscles surrounding the urethra usually help it stay closed during the filling of the bladder. These muscles usually relax only during intentional urination.

**Urethral Sphincter** A ring-like muscle that surrounds the urethra and helps it stay closed, preventing unintentional leakage. When relaxed, a sphincter allows materials such as urine to pass through the opening.<sup>24</sup>

**Urge Urinary Incontinence** Unintentional leakage of urine due to an uncontrollable urge to urinate, including the sensation of urgency either before or during leakage.<sup>4</sup> Urge urinary incontinence is usually associated with the loss of a large volume of urine.

**Urgency** A strong, sudden urge to urinate, which is difficult to deter.<sup>4</sup>

**Urine** The fluid and dissolved substances excreted by the kidney through the bladder.<sup>24</sup>

**Urinate/Urination** To expel urine from the bladder.

**Void/Voiding** To expel urine from the bladder.

**Voiding Diary** A notebook or other booklet used to track the frequency of trips to the bathroom and any wetting accidents.<sup>3,4</sup> A diary can also be used to record when food and drinks are consumed, in order to see how dietary changes affect Overactive Bladder. It can also be used to track improvements in bladder control over the course of a treatment program.

**Voluntary Voiding** Urinating when intended rather than due to urge.