

Introduction Section Summary and Key Points

In this section, we were introduced to Mind Over Matter: Healthy Bowels, Healthy Bladder program (MOM). MOM is traditionally an in-person program for a small group of older women that meets for three sessions.

- MOM teaches women about:
 - How the bladder, bowels, and pelvic floor muscles work together
 - How to do pelvic floor muscle exercises
 - How to make changes to fiber and fluid intake to improve symptoms
 - How to have effective conversations with healthcare providers regarding incontinence
- The techniques in MOM have been proven to improve incontinence symptoms
- From one of our research studies we found that 65% of women with incontinence would prefer to use an online version of this program, which is why this website was created!
 - To compare the effectiveness of this online program, we want your help. Please visit the “Research” section on this site to learn more about how you can participate
- We hope having access to this website from the comfort and privacy of your own home allows you to take actions to improve your bladder and bowel health!

Incontinence is the leakage of urine that leaves the bladder when we don't want it to. Leakage can also happen with the bowels.

- You are not alone! More than half of women over the age of 50 have urine leakage and 1 in 5 women over 50 have accidental bowel leakage. Incontinence problems are common as we get older but NOT normal.
- Good solutions to help with leakage exist. Solutions that don't involve medicines, surgery or wearing pads or diapers. These solutions can be helpful, regardless of your age.
- Many of these solutions are things you can do yourself, such as modifying what you eat and drink and doing simple exercises.
- Losing weight can improve bowel and bladder leakage. Women who are overweight have greater risk of having incontinence.
- Not drinking enough fluids can make leakage worse. Not getting enough fluids worsens constipation and if the rectum is full of constipated stool, it takes up more space in the pelvis, leaving the bladder with less space to expand when storing urine.
- Not getting enough fiber can lead to constipation, but it can also lead to loose stools because fiber is also what helps stool stick together so that it is easier to pass.

We also learned about the self-efficacy cycle.

Self-efficacy is our belief in our ability to succeed in specific situations or tasks.

- We talked about the importance of thinking not only about what to do to improve symptoms, but also about whether we will do them and how.

Important note: The information on this website does not take the place of a medical provider. If what you learn here is different from what you are told by your provider, you should not make any changes without talking to him or her first.