

Information Sheet

Ideas for Bladder Training

It is important to obtain your urologist's permission before commencing a bladder training program.

Only a small number of children with spina bifida are able to be toilet trained. Parents should not be discouraged from trying to toilet train their children, but it is important to have realistic expectations.

Bladder training is usually begun around 2-3 years of age

TOILET TIMING

Children often need a parent to sit with them while they are on the potty or toilet. This is time consuming and so it is better to begin toilet training when a parent has enough time and the child shows some interest. For toilet training to be successful the child needs some feeling in the bladder, the feeling of passing urine or an awareness of being wet compared to dry.

It is a good idea to have a regular routine of sitting your child on the potty or toilet just after waking up, after meals or roughly half an hour after drinking. Hopefully the child will have some success with passing urine and this can become a daily routine.

It is not productive for the child to sit for longer than 15 minutes if there is no result.

TECHNIQUES TO ASSIST WITH PASSING URINE

- Wiping the genital area with wet toilet paper can help the child to pass urine
- Laughing or blowing can help the child to pass urine
- Encouraging the child to think about how the bladder feels ie full or empty

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Praise the children's efforts, not just their results
- Try not to be disappointed by accidents
- Be aware that several things can alter an established bladder routine. Things such as additional physical activity, excitement, a change in body temperature brought about by swimming, medication can all affect the timing of bladder emptying.