



David Fairlamb THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Apart from caffeine certain foods and drinks can irritate the bladder, such as spicy foods, artificial sweeteners, alcohol, and citrus fruits. Keeping a food diary and identifying triggers can help you make better choices.

FITNESS TIP

Regular exercise strengthens pelvic muscles, improving bladder control, therefore helps reduce overactive bladder symptoms.

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AN overactive bladder is a common medical condition that affects millions of people, particularly as we age. It is characterised by a sudden and uncontrollable urge to urinate, often resulting in frequent trips to the bathroom. While several factors can contribute to the development of an overactive bladder, one major factor is caffeine.

■ Caffeine's Impact on our Bladder Function

Caffeine is a natural stimulant found in various drinks and foods, including coffee, tea, soft drinks, and chocolate. It has been known to affect our bladder in several ways, potentially exacerbating the symptoms of an overactive bladder

■ Increased Urination Frequency

Caffeine is a diuretic, which means it increases urine production. When consumed, caffeine prompts the kidneys to release more fluid. For those with an overactive bladder, this can be particularly problematic, as it adds to the urgency and frequency of bathroom trips.

■ Bladder Irritation

Caffeine can irritate the bladder lining, making it more sensitive and prone to involuntary contractions. This heightened sensitivity can trigger overactive bladder's symptoms, such as sudden urges to urinate and potential leakage.

■ Impact on Sleep

Many people consume caffeine-containing beverages throughout the day, including in the evening. This can lead to waking up more in the night and increased toilet visits, negatively affecting sleep quality. Poor sleep can further aggravate the symptoms of an overactive bladder. Avoid drinking 3-4 hours before bed

*Life begins at
the edge of your
comfort zone
- step beyond it
to see your true
potential*

**Motivational quote of
the day**

over a period of time and see if this makes a positive difference.

■ Managing an Overactive Bladder with Caffeine Sensitivity

If you suspect that caffeine may be linked to your overactive bladder symptoms, here are a few tips to help manage your condition

■ Limit Caffeine Intake

The most direct way to reduce the impact of caffeine on your overactive bladder is to limit or eliminate caffeine rich foods and drinks from your diet. Try for caffeine free alternatives such as herbal teas, decaffeinated coffee, or water instead.

■ Stay Hydrated

While it may seem counterintuitive, drinking enough water is essential for maintaining healthy bladder function. Dehydration can worsen overactive bladder symptoms. It's crucial to strike a balance

between staying hydrated and avoiding excessive fluid intake close to bedtime.

■ Monitor Your Diet

In addition to caffeine, certain foods and drinks can irritate the bladder, such as spicy foods, artificial sweeteners, alcohol, and citrus fruits. Keeping a food diary and identifying triggers can help you make better choices.

■ Pelvic Floor Exercises

Pelvic floor exercises can help



> Too much caffeine can irritate the bladder lining

strengthen the muscles responsible for bladder control. Regular practice can improve your ability to manage urges and reduce the risk of accidents.

■ Bladder Training

Bladder training involves gradually increasing the time between bathroom visits, extending the intervals to reduce urgency. This can help retrain your bladder and increase its capacity.

■ Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle

Overall, a healthy lifestyle that includes regular exercise, weight management, and stress reduction can positively influence bladder function and the management of an overactive bladder.

There is a clear link between an overactive bladder and caffeine consumption, however, by making lifestyle changes and monitoring your diet, gives you the best chance to manage this condition and improve your quality of life.