



## **Keeping a Voiding Diary – What, How and Why**

*Article submitted by Christine Pruneau, RN, Regional Clinician – First Quality Enterprises, Inc.  
For more information visit their website [www.FirstQuality.com](http://www.FirstQuality.com).*

No matter what age or gender, urinary incontinence can be a nuisance at best. But, for some of us, it becomes much more.

Urge incontinence, or “overactive bladder” as they say on TV, happens when the bladder muscles contract strongly, giving a person a big urge to void. This is when we find ourselves running to the bathroom for fear of an incontinent episode. But like many conditions, Overactive Bladder can be managed. One way to manage it is with a Toileting Program.

Toileting Programs are not just for toddlers and Senior Citizens. They’re merely a way of paying attention to when we usually need to use a bathroom, and simply dealing with it before we have an accident. How do we know when we need to go? The answer to that is the Voiding Diary.

A voiding diary is a simple record of each time a person has a urinary void during the course of a day. By noting the times you void (or have an incontinent episode) each day, you will see a trend within a week or so. The voiding diary below is an example of a simple grid that can be used to track voids, but you can use anything you like. The point is that you will find a trend in your voiding habits within a few days if you are diligent in completing the diary.

Once the voiding diary is completed, you can plan your Toileting Program based on the voiding diary results. If you used the bathroom (or were incontinent) at a certain time of day, you would plan to go to the bathroom before these times as part of your toileting program. This program, along with Kegel exercises, proper diet and fluids, and even medications can help to reduce embarrassing accidents. If you are seeing a physician regarding your incontinence, bring in your completed voiding diary. It may give your doctor extra insight into your condition.

An example of a good use for a toileting program is seen with those who take diuretic “water” pills in the morning. Once the medication is taken, many of us need to use the bathroom more often. The diary will track the times you toileted yourself (or were incontinent) and you will know to use the bathroom before those times.

While you are working toward a program, continue to use an absorbent product to protect your clothing from urine. Feel free to peruse our website for products that meet the needs for light, moderate or heavy incontinence. Once on a toileting program, you may see less need for absorbent products. You may also be able to use a smaller product if you find you need less protection.

**[www.FamilyCaregiverNetwork.com](http://www.FamilyCaregiverNetwork.com) Featuring *“National Caregiver Directory”***

When you are comfortable with your toileting program you no longer need to keep the diary. And keep in mind, toileting programs have been around for a long time and definitely nothing new. They are a proven way to help manage incontinence at home. If you can be attentive to this program, you will likely be rewarded with dryness and comfort.

**For more information about incontinent products visit the Easy Home Medical Supplies website - [www.EasyHomeMedicalSupplies.com](http://www.EasyHomeMedicalSupplies.com)**

© 2011, All Rights Reserved by Christine Pruneau, RN, First Quality Enterprises, Inc.

Posted on [www.FamilyCaregiverNetwork.com](http://www.FamilyCaregiverNetwork.com), Nov-Dec 2011

File Name: ARTICLE\_voiding\_diary.doc