

Bladder and bowel



When you have PSP you may find that you develop some problems with constipation, reduced bowel control, and urinary issues.

Constipation

If you are less able to move around due to reduced mobility, you may find constipation becomes more of a problem for you. Constipation may also occur as a side effect of your medication, or perhaps because you are eating and drinking less. If you are experiencing constipation you will need to seek advice from your GP. However there are some measures you can take yourself to help reduce the occurrence of constipation.

Keep digestion healthy by:

- Ensuring that there is plenty of fibre in your diet – include vegetables, fruit and whole grain products
- Drinking plenty of fluids throughout the day. If swallowing is an issue, then ask your GP for advice on keeping up fluid intake
- Exercising where possible, if it is safe to do so – ask your physiotherapist for guidance
- Allowing enough unhurried time to visit the loo
- Alerting your GP about any problems so they can monitor the situation.

Bladder

You may find that you have a frequent and sudden urge to pass water, or that you have difficulty starting to pass water even when your bladder is full.

Your GP can offer advice and double check that there is no infection. They can also offer a referral to a continence adviser who will be able to offer in-depth advice and reassurance.

Top Tips

- Drink plenty of fluids, especially water, but keep stimulants like tea and coffee to a minimum in the evening
- Wear clothes with elasticated waists or hook and loop fastenings make getting to the toilet easier
- Ask your occupational therapist for advice on toilet fittings, such as raised seats and grab rails.

There are plenty of discreet aids available for incontinence problems, ranging from pads to absorbent sheets. In some circumstances members of your healthcare team may suggest that a catheter is the best option for you, especially if you have difficulty in emptying your bladder fully. Don't be embarrassed to mention any problems you have, and remember that the healthcare team you deal with have seen many similar situations before.