

Case study: Susan who has stress incontinence

SUSAN: Every time I coughed, I really could not hold on to the urine at all and it really used to come gushing out.

I can remember sitting on the settee and coughing away, I could feel that I was losing urine and then I was frightened to stand up because I just didn't know how far it had come through my clothes and I'd even had different absorbent pads. I'd gone from a low one to a medium and in the end, I got quite a high absorbency pad because I was so concerned about it coming through and showing through on my clothes.

And there's also the concern that it's smelling as well. Not particularly comfortably, particularly when you've had a large loss of urine. What I tried to do was, I've always felt I've got a large capacity bladder and I can go quite a few hours without going to the toilet but through these last few months with the stress incontinence, I've made a conscious effort to go to the toilet more to keep my bladder empty, so that I'm losing less urine when I actually cough.

It's not a nice thing to feel that you're wet, that you've got to wear a pad and you want to feel in control of your bladder. Sometimes after I've coughed and leaked urine, I was frightened to stand up just in case it had come through onto my clothes and people could see a damp patch, so yes it does impact on your daily life.

It didn't stop me from going out but I always made sure I went to the toilet last thing before I went out and also I made sure I put a clean pad on so I'd got a pad with a good amount of absorbency in it before I went out.