

Understanding Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI)

If you have experienced embarrassment following involuntary urine loss, perhaps during coughing, laughing, sneezing or exercise, you are not alone. This condition known as stress urinary incontinence (SUI) affects millions of women and is most common after the childbearing years. Although the reasons are varied, SUI often occurs as a result of weakened support from the pelvic diaphragm and a weakening urethra.

What are the risk factors?

- Childbirth: Pregnancy and childbirth tend to flatten, stretch and weaken muscles in the pelvic floor. This lack of support can lead to urine leakage.
- Menopause: Because the ovaries stop producing estrogen during menopause, this hormone deficiency can lead to a thinner urethra lining and weakened sphincter and bladder muscles.
- Urinary tract infections can lead to SUI
- Illnesses that results in excessive coughing or sneezing
- Obesity
- Smoking that causes excessive coughing
- Diabetes can cause excess urine production and nerve damage
- Excessive caffeine or alcohol consumption can trigger SUI
- Medications that promote urine production
- Certain athletic activities that put pressure on the bladder

While SUI is a troubling condition that can interrupt daily activities, there are medical solutions. For the millions of women who are suffering silently with symptoms of stress urinary incontinence, the first step is to schedule a consultation with a board-certified Urogynecologist who can better identify the cause of your SUI.