

Do you have the problem no one talks about?

Kathy Freeman had a problem millions of women share: incontinence. She constantly feared her bladder would leak. But thanks to a new procedure, she's free of worry!



"Now I can go anywhere without worrying," says Kathy with her son, Cam, and daughter, Grace.

Not again! Kathy Freeman gasped. Three times a day or more she felt the leakage.

It's a problem everyone thinks only happens when women get older, the Sharpsburg, Georgia, mom of two thought. Yet at 30, she couldn't go out without worrying that she'd lose control of her bladder. And nothing helped.

There has to be a better fix than adult diapers! she thought. So she found one...

"This is so embarrassing!" Kathy agonized when her bladder proved less reliable after two babies. Welcome to the club, friends commiserated. But the Kegels they suggested didn't help—she still leaked whenever she sneezed, coughed or laughed.

Desperate to stay dry, she tried taking frequent bathroom breaks, but she *still* had to wear pads every day!

By then, she wasn't a new mom anymore. So shouldn't things be back to normal? But an exam by her gynecologist showed nothing wrong!

30 minutes to relief

Her doctor referred Kathy to a urogynecologist. And after a quick test, he

had a diagnosis: stress incontinence. The ligaments supporting her urethra had been stretched by the strain of pregnancy and childbirth.

But the usual treatment when Kegels failed required abdominal surgery, which meant a hospital stay, general anesthesia, complications and recovery time!

And who will take care of my kids until I'm well? Kathy, a stay-at-home mom, worried.

Did you know? More than 30 million women live with incontinence—many because they are too embarrassed to ask for help.

"There is another option," Robert Moore, M.D., said: the Mini-Arc, a mesh sling inserted through the vagina to lift the urethra and bladder back to normal position. She'd need only a few stitches and local anesthesia. Plus she'd be home the same day!

"Nothing hurts!" she marveled after the 30-minute procedure. And, even better, nothing leaked!

For the first time in years, she was free of shame!

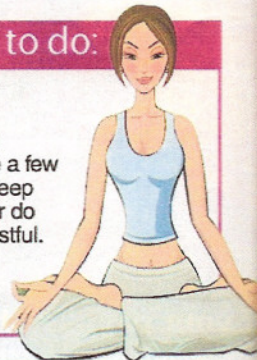
"Now I'm not embarrassed anymore!" Kathy says. "So I'm telling everyone I know about my solution. Because no woman has to live with this problem!"

—Andrea Florczak

Gotta go too often? Here's what to do:

- **Take it easy on caffeine, which is a diuretic.** Try to limit coffee and black tea to one cup a day.
- **Hold it!** By gradually increasing the time between bathroom trips, you can train your bladder to hold for longer.
- **Relax.** Anxiety can stimulate the bladder. Take a few minutes for deep breathing—or do something restful.

Talk to your doctor if you have a frequent, chronic urge to urinate: She can rule out a bladder infection or other conditions that require medical treatment.



Your most common embarrassing questions, answered!

❑ **Why is there an odor "down there"?**
"Most likely, it's a yeast infection," says Andrew Jones, M.D. (www.womenshealthinstituteoftexas.com). Mention it to your doctor!

❑ **Why is love-making painful?**
"Vaginal dryness is usually the reason, and your doctor can prescribe creams and pills that will help right away," says Dr. Jones.

❑ **Why do I sweat so much?**
Perspire heavily all the time? You probably have a condition called hyperhidrosis—now treated with Botox, which paralyzes the sweat glands for months.

❑ **Why am I so gassy?**
The culprit may be lactose intolerance, or swallowing too much air during meals. Try slowing down when you eat, and eliminating suspect foods. If it still doesn't resolve, see a doctor.

