

The Urinary Bladder and Urethra

By Jennifer Kenny

¹ Do you know what job your bladder plays in your body's functioning? It is a major player in the excretory system. After your kidneys have completed cleaning and filtering, the liquid waste moves from your kidneys through the ureters to the bladder.

² The bladder is a stretchy, muscular bag. When it is empty, it is the size of the deflated balloon. It is pear-shaped. When it stores urine, it expands like a balloon. The bladder has thin, but strong walls. It is located in the middle of the lower abdomen.

³ Your bladder feels comfortable storing one cup of urine. It is capable of holding over a pint, but you'll feel it!

⁴ The bladder has three layers of muscles. They are very important for releasing the urine from the bladder. Slippery mucus helps to protect the bladder walls. The muscles in the bladder contract when it is time to empty the bladder.

⁵ The internal sphincter, or a thick ring of muscle, surrounds the opening of the bladder where urine flows out. It is normally contracted to keep the urine in. The internal sphincter relaxes when there is about one cup of fluid in the bladder so the fluid can be released. Valves keep the urine from going back toward the kidneys while the bladder contracts.

⁶ There is also an external urethral sphincter. You have the ability to control it so that you can wait a bit to urinate - if you are in the car or taking a test, etc. It will at least suppress the urge for a while.

⁷ The urine flows out of the body through the urethra. In men, this tube is eight inches long and goes through the penis. In women, this tube is only two inches long, and ends in front of the vagina. When it is time, the bladder empties into the urethra so you can urinate.

⁸ Eliminating wastes from the body is essential to good health. Therefore, it is obvious how important the bladder and urethra are in your excretory system's well being.

Name _____

Science Pd: _____

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<p>1. The _____ is a stretchy organ that stores urine.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Bladder</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Urethra</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Kidney</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Ureter</p>	<p>2. Liquid wastes move from the kidneys to the bladder through the _____.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Urethra</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Ureters</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Collecting tubules</p>
<p>3. Your bladder feels comfortable storing ____ cup(s) of urine.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Two</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Three</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Four</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D One</p>	<p>4. Your bladder has _____ layers of muscles.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Two</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Three</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Five</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Four</p>
<p>5. _____ keep the urine from going back toward the kidneys while the bladder contracts.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Stones</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Knots</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Valves</p>	<p>6. You have the ability to control the external urethral sphincter.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>
<p>7. The urethra is the same size in men and women.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>	