

Procedures to treat incontinence

Contributed by Dr. Mohamed Akl, a urogynecologist at Banner Gateway Medical Center.

ASK THE EXPERT

Question: I had a bladder surgery for urinary leakage and/or dropped bladder but it did not work. What do I do?

Urinary incontinence and/or vaginal prolapse can be very embarrassing

Answer: Urinary incontinence and dropped bladder are common problems in women. Urinary incontinence is the uncontrolled leakage of urine from the bladder. This problem affects about 13 million adults in the United States, 85 percent of whom are women. Vaginal prolapse is a term used to



**Mohamed
Akl**

describe "sagging" or "drop" of the bladder, urethra, rectum or uterus. Your physician may refer to this disorder as "cystocele," rectocele or enterocele." It has been estimated that the lifetime risk of surgery for prolapse or incontinence is 11 percent.

ing and can have significant impact on the quality of life. A lot of women are embarrassed to talk to their primary care physicians about incontinence and/or prolapse, others think that it is a natural part of the aging process. Urogynecology is a field in medicine that focuses on female bladder and pelvic floor disorders.

In the past, bladder lifts and incontinence procedures had a bad reputation for a high recurrence rate. However, the field of urogynecology has progressed and continues to develop every day. New procedures have evolved. A specialist (urogynecologist) can educate you as to the expected chance of cure and help you make an educated decision regarding your therapy. The urogynecologist specializes in female bladder problems and has additional fellowship training focused on female bladder and pelvic floor disorders. If you have bladder control problems and/or vaginal prolapse, ask your primary care physician to refer you to a specialist (urogynecologist).