

# Urethral Bulking

WARWIKI

Patient Information · An office injection for stress urine leakage

Urethral bulking is a minimally invasive treatment for **stress urinary incontinence** — leaking with coughing, laughing, or activity. A soft material is injected around the urethra to help it seal, so less urine escapes when pressure rises. It is quick, needs no incision, and can be an alternative or a step before sling surgery.

## How It Works

The bulking material is placed into the wall of the urethra at a few points, **plumping it up** so the channel closes more completely. With the urethra better sealed, sudden increases in belly pressure are less likely to push urine out.

## Is It Right for Me?

- A good option if you want a **quick, low-risk** treatment without surgery
- Helpful for those who aren't candidates for, or prefer to avoid, a sling
- Can be a **bridge** before deciding on surgery

It is generally **less durable** than a sling and may not fully cure leakage, but it can be **repeated** if it wears off.

## LEARN THE TERMS

### Stress incontinence

Leaking with pressure — coughing, laughing, lifting, exercise.

### Bulking agent

The soft material injected to plump the urethral wall.

### Urethra

The tube that carries urine out of the body.

### Cystoscope

The thin camera used to guide the injection.

### Sling

A surgical support under the urethra — a more durable alternative.

**WILL IT HURT?** It's usually an **office procedure with local numbing**, taking about 10–15 minutes. Most people feel only mild pressure and go home the same day, back to normal activity quickly. Brief burning afterward is common.

## How to Get Ready

- A **urine test** to rule out infection beforehand
- Tell your team about **blood thinners** and any allergies
- No major preparation — you can usually drive yourself home

## What Happens

- 1 Numbing medicine is applied.
- 2 A thin **cystoscope** is passed to view the urethra.
- 3 The bulking material is injected at a few points around the urethra.
- 4 The scope is removed; you empty your bladder before leaving.

## After

- Mild burning, urgency, or a little blood in the urine for a day or two is normal.
- You may have **temporary trouble emptying** right after — usually brief.

### Call your team if you have:

- You **can't urinate** after the procedure
- Fever or chills (possible infection)
- Heavy bleeding or worsening pain

## Good to Know

- The full effect is seen within a few weeks.
- If leakage returns over time, the injection can be **repeated**.
- A sling remains an option later if you want a more lasting fix.

### THREE THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. Urethral bulking is a quick, no-incision injection that helps the urethra seal, reducing stress leakage.
2. It's less durable than a sling and may not fully cure leakage, but it's low-risk and repeatable.
3. Recovery is fast. Call if you can't urinate or develop a fever afterward.