

## Quick fix for an embarrassing problem



To Judy Derby, stress urinary incontinence was an embarrassing problem, but she found relief with the gynecologic/urology team at UW Medical Center.

Like many women, when **Judy Derby** sneezed or coughed she frequently lost a little urine. She told her doctor about it and was advised to try kegel exercises. Her condition was called stress urinary incontinence, or SUI, and kegels were great for a few years, until her SUI got worse.

**Kegels are exercises that strengthen a woman's pelvic floor muscles. These muscles are attached to the pelvic bone and help hold up the pelvic organs.**

"I worried about the odor all the time, even though I used pads," says Judy. "But then my skin got irritated."

Judy made an appointment to see **Dr. Gretchen Lentz**, UW associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of the Division of Women's



From left, Dr. Gretchen Lentz, Dr. Jane Miller, Dr. Elizabeth Miller, Keri Hadley, R.N., Dr. Michael Fialkow

Health. Women with pelvic floor problems from bowel dysfunction, sexual dysfunction, and pelvic floor prolapse, benefit from the team approach taken by four physicians within the **Women's Urology/Urogynecology Clinic**, located within the new Surgery Pavilion at UW Medical Center.

Dr. Lentz and her team recommended that Judy try the TVT sling (tension-free

vaginal tape) that provides tension-free support to prevent stress urinary incontinence. In a simple outpatient procedure, Judy's condition would be corrected.

"The TVT sling is my preferred operation for urinary incontinence in women because it is a very low-risk procedure, effective, and can be done as an outpatient procedure," says **Dr. Elizabeth A. Miller**, UW acting assistant professor of urology.

"We tailor surgical plans to a patient's particular problem," says Dr. Lentz. "With only three small incisions, we insert a polypropylene mesh tape under the urethra. For 85 to 95 percent of TVT sling patients, there is a dramatic improvement."

"It is as good or better than other procedures we have to date," says **Dr. Jane Miller**, UW associate professor of urology, and a member of the urogynecology team.

SUI can occur in women for many reasons – pelvic surgeries, menopause, or estrogen deficiency, for example.

"It's an old wives' tale that you have to have had children to have stress urinary incontinence," Judy says, "because I've never had children."

Other problems women experience are urge incontinence, or overactive bladder, and prolapse.

"Thirty percent of women will have these disorders; 11 percent will have an operation to correct it," says Dr. Lentz.

The women's urogynecologic team uses videodynamics to diagnose urinary tract disorders, using fluoroscopy and bladder pressures.

"After the surgery, I had no post-operative pain," Judy says. "Just a bit of a sore abdomen, but that was it. I was amazed."

**For more information about the TVT sling or female urology issues, please contact the Women's Urology/Urogynecology Clinic at 206-598-4294.**