

Exercise app reduces incontinence

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Credit: Kati Mets

Urinary leakage whilst coughing and jumping is common in women. Using a self-administered treatment via a mobile app called Tät for three months reduced symptoms, led to fewer leakages and improved quality of life. This according to a study within the project eContinence (in Swedish Tät.nu) at Umeå University published in *Neurology and*

Urodynamics.

"The results of our evaluation clearly show that the [app](#) Tät was efficient as a first-line treatment for women with [stress urinary incontinence](#)," says Eva Samuelsson, associate professor at the Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine and in charge of the project tät.nu. "Self-managed exercises also seem to be an appreciated form of treatment, which is why we have made the app available free for everyone."

eContinence is a research project conducted by researchers at the Unit for Family Medicine at Umeå University. The objective has been to develop, evaluate and implement eTreatments for [urinary incontinence](#). The app Tät was developed in collaboration with the university's IT developing office, ITS. The app offers information on incontinence, lifestyle advice, pelvic floor exercises, reminders and statistics.

The app has been evaluated in a study with 123 participating women from all over Sweden. Participants were randomly chosen for either treatment using the app for three months or for a [control group](#) without treatment. The self-reported results and lists of leakage showed that the situation for women who had used the app improved with regard to symptom, quality of life, number of leakages and use of incontinence pads, and participants experienced an improvement. The number of leakages was reduced from a median of three times to once per day in the group that had used the app. The noticeable changes were compared with the participants in the control group to be statistically significant.

Incontinence is a common inconvenience for women, but basic treatment based on pelvic floor exercises is often efficient. But many women never seek help, despite the fact that the treatment is simple and efficient. This is often due to a perception that the troubles are embarrassing to talk about or that women feel badly treated in the health care system.

"We are aware that many women with these problems never seek help in usual health care. Instead, they seek information on their own. By offering treatment via an app, we are hoping that more [women](#) will discover and gain access to efficient treatment," says Ina Asklund, general practitioner in Krokom in Jämtland county council and doctoral student at the Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine.

More information: Ina Asklund et al, Mobile app for treatment of stress urinary incontinence: A randomized controlled trial, *Neurourology and Urodynamics* (2016). [DOI: 10.1002/nau.23116](https://doi.org/10.1002/nau.23116)

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