



# WOMEN'S HEALTH

## Don't Let An Embarrassing Health Condition Add Stress To Your Life

(NAPSA)—For most people, the summer can't arrive fast enough. But Jody Smith, a 35-year-old mother of two, found even the thought of summer stressful.

Smith's anxiety was caused by the increased difficulty of keeping stress urinary incontinence (SUI) a secret from others. SUI is the involuntary loss of urine that occurs with sudden movements such as coughing, laughing, sneezing or exercise. Hiding the signs of SUI—wet spots and odor—is that much more difficult in summer: clothing is often light-colored, fabrics are thinner and increased activity can lead to more accidents.

"I dreaded summer," Smith admits. "I avoided certain clothes and stayed away from the beach and the park with my kids because I felt so self-conscious about leaking."

She isn't alone—eight million women have SUI, which can result from childbirth, pelvic muscle strain or estrogen loss as women approach menopause. In fact, one in four women between the ages of 30 and 59 has experienced an episode of incontinence.

"Many women unnecessarily cope with this condition season after season," says Dr. Donnica Moore, M.D. and women's health expert. "Instead of hiding SUI, they could actually be treating it. After trying therapies like Kegel exercises, women may want to consider a minimally-invasive 'sling' procedure that restores the body's ability to control urine loss."

One such option uses Gynecare TVT™ Tension-free Support for Incontinence. The treatment is used in a simple outpatient procedure that takes as little as 30 minutes and women can usually return home the same day. During the procedure, a surgeon provides



support to the urethra by placing a "sling" or mesh tape beneath it. This keeps the urethra closed during sudden movements such as coughing or sneezing, preventing the involuntary loss of urine. To date, more than 500,000 women worldwide have been treated.

All medical and surgical procedures carry risk. Rare but possible complications could include injury to blood vessels or nerves, difficulty urinating and bladder and bowel injury. Women who are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant are not good candidates for this procedure, since childbirth results in changes to the anatomy.

"Women with SUI have effective, long-term solutions available to them," says Dr. Moore. "But doctors can't help unless they are told about the problem. Enduring the embarrassment of a little conversation is worth it to be SUI-free."

For Smith, the procedure changed not just her summer, but also her whole life. "For the first time I could wear lighter clothing, go walking with co-workers at lunch and laugh and play at the boardwalk with my children—things I could never have done before without leaking."

For more information on SUI, visit [www.DrDonnica.com](http://www.DrDonnica.com).