

OVERACTIVE BLADDER

Overactive Bladder is a condition that is characterized by urinary **urgency** (strong desire to void), **frequency** (voiding more than 8 times in 24 hours), and/or **urge incontinence** (leakage of urine associated with urgency).

Overactive bladder affects both women and men and may lead to embarrassment from unexpected urinary leakage limiting one's work and social life. The good news is that after a brief evaluation to determine the cause of overactive bladder, you can receive treatments that may greatly reduce or eliminate the symptoms of overactive bladder and help you manage their effect on your daily life.

People with overactive bladder may have one or more of the following underlying conditions: Parkinson's disease, stroke, multiple sclerosis, high urine production and high fluid intake, poor kidney function or diabetes, urinary tract infections, enlarged prostate, constipation or previous operations to treat other forms of incontinence. A basic evaluation will establish the cause.

The typical evaluation includes: a full medical history; physical examination with particular focus on your abdomen and genitals (the location of the bladder and associated organs); urine sample to test for infection, traces of blood or other abnormalities; and possibly specialized tests to assess bladder function (urodynamics) and/or look inside your bladder (cystoscopy).

What are the Treatments for Overactive Bladder:

Behavioral interventions such as reduction of fluids or timing of fluids, timed voiding, pelvic muscle retraining, and absorbent pads.

Medications that relax the bladder including tolterodine (Detrol), fesoteridine (Toviaz), oxybutynin (Ditropan), an oxybutynin skin patch (Oxytrol), trospium (Sanctura), solifenacin (Vesicare) and darifenacin (Enablex). Common side effects of these drugs, when they occur, include constipation and dry eyes and mouth.

Mirabegron (Myrbetriq) is in a different class of medications – no dry mouth or constipation.

PTNS (posterior tibial nerve stimulation) adjusts signals of the overactive bladder nerves through an acupuncture technique in the ankle.

Twelve weekly 30 minute sessions are needed to determine if you respond, and then ongoing periodic treatments are used for a lasting effect.

InterStim (sacral nerve stimulation) helps to adjust the signals of the overactive bladder nerves to allow more normal urinary urge and voiding. An office test can determine if you would be a good candidate for the permanent small implant that goes under the skin in the gluteal region.

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BOTOX (botulinum toxin A) in small doses directly injected into the bladder muscle, relaxes bladder muscle spasm. Side effects include difficulty in urination (retention).

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