

## Patient Information about Bladder Control Problems/Overactive Bladder

<http://www.urologychannel.com/patient-information-overactive-bladder-oab/index.shtml>

Overactive bladder (OAB) is a form of urinary incontinence. People who have bladder control problems experience a frequent, urgent need to urinate (called urgency), which often results in involuntary urine loss. Overactive bladder, frequent urination, and other bladder symptoms can diminish self-esteem and interfere with daily life.

OAB risk factors and causes include nerve damage, bladder and kidney stones, neurological diseases, such as multiple sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease, and medication side effects. Urinary tract infection (UTI) can cause symptoms similar to overactive bladder.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., urologist) about bladder control problems.

**Print this page**, mark the questions you would like answered, and bring it with you to your next appointment. Asking the right questions can help improve communication with your doctor and allow you to develop a more successful OAB treatment plan and better manage your bladder control problems.

### Questions to Ask Your Doctor about OAB

- What is overactive bladder (OAB)?
- Why do you suspect that I have OAB?
- What are common overactive bladder symptoms?
- What other conditions can cause symptoms similar to OAB?
- Are there any complications associated with overactive bladder?
- What are possible causes for bladder control problems?
- What do you suspect is the underlying cause for my condition?
- What does OAB diagnosis involve?
- What is a voiding diary?
- Might this tool be helpful in diagnosing bladder control problems or treating OAB? Why or why not?

- What types of diagnostic tests might be performed?
- What is urinalysis?
- What do postvoid residual volume (PRV), urodynamic testing (e.g., cystometry, uroflowmetry), cystoscopy, and imaging tests (e.g., ultrasound, x-ray) involve?
- Which of these diagnostic tests do you recommend?
- Why do you recommend these tests?
- What type(s) of overactive bladder treatments are available?
- Which OAB treatment(s) do you recommend?
- Why do you recommend these treatments?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible side effects of these OAB treatments?
- What does bladder retraining with timed voiding involve?
- Might this OAB treatment be helpful? Why or why not?
- What types of medications are used to treat bladder control problems?
- Might medication be helpful? Why or why not?
- What are common side effects of drugs used to treat OAB?
- What should I do if I experience severe side effects? **Telephone number to call:**
- What kinds of medical devices are available to reduce OAB symptoms?
- What is sacral nerve stimulation?
- Might this treatment be helpful? Why or why not?
- What are the possible adverse effects of this OAB treatment

- What should I do if I experience serious side effects related to neurostimulation?  
**Telephone number to call:**
- What does surgery for overactive bladder involve?
- Might a surgical procedure, such as bladder augmentation, be helpful to treat my condition? Why or why not?
- What does this type of surgery involve?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications associated with OAB surgery?
- Might complementary and alternative OAB treatments be helpful? Why or why not?
- What types of herbal medicines or homeopathic treatments might be helpful?
- What are the potential benefits and risks of these therapies?
- Might my bladder control problems be associated with food sensitivities?
- If so, might performing an elimination and challenge diet be helpful?
- What are the different options for performing an elimination and challenge diet?
- Do you recommend that I participate in a clinical trial for people with bladder control problems? Why or why not?
- Can you recommend an online or local support group for people with OAB?
- Can you recommend additional resources for information about overactive bladder?
- Can bladder control problems be prevented? If so, what does OAB prevention involve?

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### Notes/Additional Information