

Overactive Bladder FAQ's

What is OAB?

OAB is a common medical condition that occurs when a large muscle in the bladder, known as the detrusor, contracts more often than normal. This causes a person to feel a sudden and sometimes overwhelming urge to urinate even when the bladder isn't full.



What are the symptoms of OAB?

- **Urgency:**
Frequent, sudden, strong urges to urinate with little or no chance to postpone urination.
- **Frequency:**
Having to urinate more than 8 times over 24 hours, often including 2 or more times at night
- **Urge Incontinence:**
An involuntary loss of or leaking of urine following a sudden, strong desire to urinate.

Are there different types of urinary incontinence?

Urinary incontinence is any involuntary loss of urine. There are different types of incontinence whose symptoms may appear to be similar. To help avoid confusion, the different types of urinary incontinence are described here.

▪ **Urge Incontinence**

Urge incontinence is a component of overactive bladder. Urge incontinence occurs when the bladder contracts involuntarily (detrusor overactivity). Symptoms include the sudden, uncontrollable need to urinate which can lead to wetting accidents.

The urge to urinate can also be especially strong at night (nocturia) and can lead to accidental leakage while sleeping (enuresis).

▪ **Mixed Symptoms (Overactive Bladder and Stress Incontinence)**

Many people who have the symptoms of overactive bladder also suffer from stress incontinence. Unfortunately, there is no single treatment that works for both conditions but each condition can be treated separately.

▪ **Stress Incontinence**

Stress incontinence occurs when the muscles around your urethra become too weak to prevent the urine in your bladder from escaping when the bladder pressure rises with increased abdominal pressure. Even the small amount of stress created by coughing, sneezing, laughing, exercising or lifting can result in a bit of leaking. May women experience this after vaginal childbirth and menopause/aging.

It is important to remember that stress incontinence is NOT the same as overactive bladder. They have different symptoms, causes, and therefore, different treatments.

