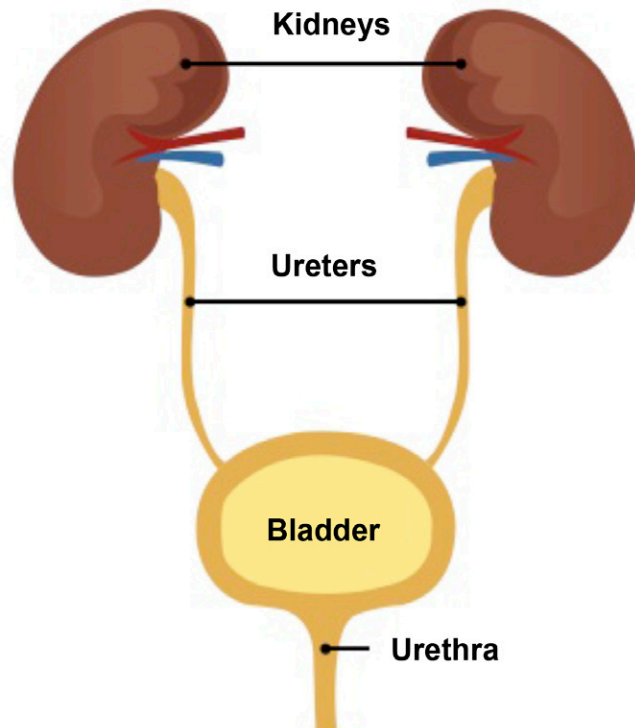




Coping with urges and leaks?

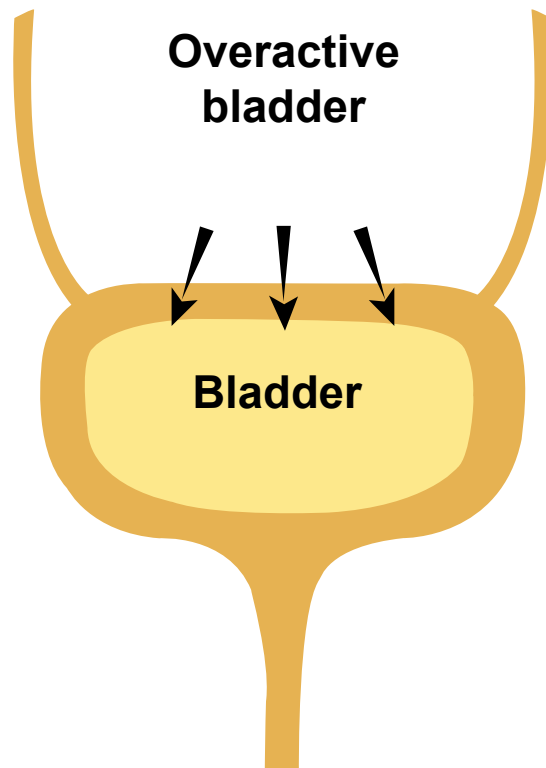
Let me help you learn more about overactive bladder (OAB) symptoms and ways to help manage them

“HOW DOES THE BLADDER WORK?”



- Within the urinary tract, the kidneys make urine and the bladder stores it
- When it is not full of urine, the bladder is relaxed
 - Nerve signals in your brain let you know when your bladder is getting full
 - Once you are ready to urinate, the brain sends a signal to the bladder
 - Then the bladder muscles squeeze (or contract), forcing the urine out through the urethra (the tube that carries urine from your body)
- If your bladder is working normally, you can delay urination for some time

“HOW DOES THE BLADDER WORK?”



OAB stands for overactive bladder.

It is **NOT** a disease. Rather, it's the name for a group of bladder symptoms.

- OAB can happen when:
 - Nerve signals between your bladder and brain tell your bladder to empty **even though it isn't full**
 - The muscles in your bladder are **too active**
 - Either way, your bladder muscles contract to pass urine **before they should**
- These contractions cause the **sudden, strong need to urinate, called urgency**

“WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF OAB?”

People with OAB regularly experience one or more of the following symptoms:

URGENCY

A sudden and overwhelming need to urinate right away.

FREQUENCY

Urinating 8 or more times per day or what feels like too often.

URGE INCONTINENCE

A sudden urge followed by urine leakage (a wetting accident).

NOCTURIA

Waking up 1 or more times during the night to use the bathroom.

Some of these symptoms can be the result of a urinary tract infection (UTI), an illness, damage to nerves, or a side effect of a medication. Your doctor will check to make sure nothing else is causing your symptoms.

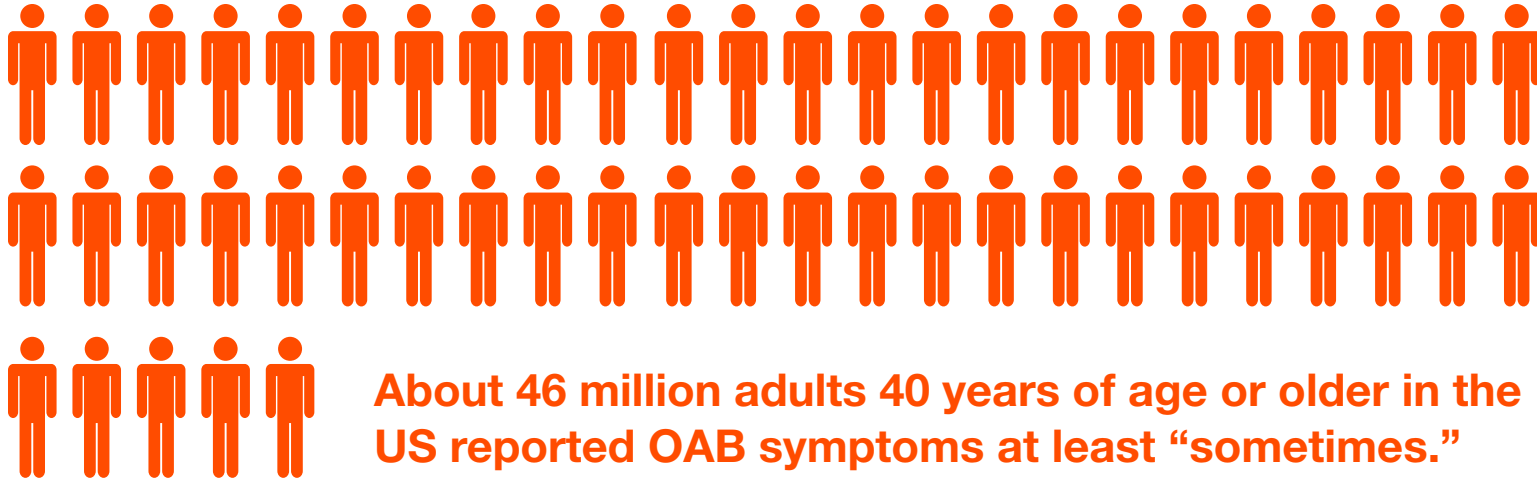
“WHAT ARE THE FACTS ABOUT OAB?”

**Don't let OAB myths prevent you from getting the help you need.
Learn the facts...**

- OAB is **NOT** “just part of being a woman”
- OAB is **NOT** “just having an ‘enlarged’ (big) prostate”
- OAB is **NOT** “just a normal part of getting older”
- OAB is **NOT** caused by something you did
- Surgery is **NOT** the only treatment for OAB
- There **ARE** treatments for OAB that can help manage symptoms
- There **ARE** treatments that many people with OAB find helpful
- There **ARE** treatments that can help, even if your symptoms aren't severe or if you don't have urine leaks

“HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE OAB?”

OAB is a common condition in the United States



Unfortunately, many people do not seek medical help because they mistakenly believe that:

- Bladder control problems are an inevitable part of aging
- There is no treatment available
- Discussing their problem with their doctor will be too embarrassing

“WHO IS AT RISK FOR OAB?”

As you grow older, you're at higher risk for OAB

GENDER

- Both **men and women** report symptoms of OAB
- Women who have gone through **menopause** have a higher than normal risk
- Men who have had **prostate problems** also seem to have an increased risk for OAB

HEALTH CONDITIONS

- People with **diseases** that **affect the brain or nervous system**, such as stroke and multiple sclerosis (MS), are at higher risk for OAB

DIET

- Food and drinks that can bother your bladder (like **caffeine**, **alcohol**, and **very spicy foods**) may make OAB symptoms worse

“HOW CAN OAB AFFECT ME?”

You often feel that you **“have to go”** right away.



This feeling makes you afraid you won't **make it to the bathroom in time.**



You may **leak urine**, even if you get to the bathroom right away.



You may go to the bathroom **many times a day**, or get up more than once at night to go.



You may be afraid to be too far from a bathroom, causing you to **stop going out with friends and family.**

“HOW ARE OAB SYMPTOMS TREATED?”

There are treatments that can help you manage your OAB symptoms. Your doctor may use one treatment alone or a combination. Treatment choices include:

LIFESTYLE CHANGES

- **Changing what you eat and drink** to see if less caffeine, alcohol, and/or spicy foods will reduce your symptoms
- Keeping a **daily “bladder diary”** of your trips to the bathroom
- Going to the bathroom at **scheduled times** during the day
- Doing “quick flick” **pelvic exercises** to help you relax your bladder muscle when you feel a strong urge to urinate

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

- Your doctor may **prescribe drugs** to help with your OAB symptoms

“I’M NERVOUS ABOUT TALKING TO MY DOCTOR...”

You may feel embarrassed to talk about your OAB symptoms.

But remember, many others have OAB. And doctors are used to hearing about all kinds of concerns.

**Don’t wait. There are many ways to treat OAB.
You just have to ask for help.**

“HOW SHOULD I TALK TO MY DOCTOR ABOUT MY URGES AND LEAKS?”

Answer and then use the following questions as a starting point for a conversation with your doctor about your urges and leaks...

- 1 How many times per day do you rush to the bathroom and worry that you won't make it? _____ times
- 2 How many times do you use the bathroom each day? _____ times
- 3 How many times a week do you limit your fluid intake to avoid so many trips to the bathroom? _____ times
- 4 How many times have you leaked urine this week? _____ times
- 5 How many times do you use the bathroom in the middle of the night? _____ times
- 6 Do you make sure you know where to find the bathroom, no matter where you are? Y N
- 7 How are your symptoms affecting your daily activities? _____

“HOW DO I PREPARE FOR MY DOCTOR APPOINTMENT?”

You may feel uneasy talking with your doctor about your bladder symptoms. A little planning beforehand will make you more confident...

- **BE PREPARED:** Before your visit, gather some important information, such as a list of the medications you take and past/current illnesses or injuries
- **BRING A FRIEND:** Ask a relative or good friend to go with you to your visit
- **BRING UP THE TOPIC:** If your doctor doesn't ask you about your bladder symptoms, bring the topic up yourself—you can even use the questionnaire you just filled out to help start the conversation
- **TAKE NOTES:** Bring a pad of paper and a pen to take notes
- **SPEAK FREELY:** Tell your doctor about all of your symptoms, making sure to explain how they are interrupting your day
- **ASK QUESTIONS:** Knowing more about treatment options is the best way to take control of the problem
- **TALK ABOUT FOLLOW-UP CARE:** Finally, ask your doctor when you should make a second appointment

“HOW MIGHT MY DOCTOR DIAGNOSE OAB?”

DURING YOUR VISIT, YOUR DOCTOR MAY:

- **Gather facts** about:
 - Your past and current health problems
 - The symptoms you’re having and how long you have had them
 - What medicines you take
 - How much liquid you drink during the day
- Give you a **physical exam** to look for something that may be causing your symptoms, including examining your abdomen
- Ask you to keep a “**bladder diary**” to learn more about your day-to-day symptoms
- **Collect a sample of your urine** to check for infection or blood and/or perform other tests, such as a bladder ultrasound, if needed