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## Treatment of Overactive Bladder Symptoms

Overactive Bladder is a condition in which your bladder has spasms & starts to feel full before it really is. Your bladder is normal in size, but acts as if it is smaller. This will give you the urge to go frequently, & sometimes you may not make it to the bathroom before leaking. While we do not understand why the condition arises, it is increasingly common with age. Symptoms are often worse at night due to fluids being mobilized from the legs when you go to bed. If you don't get this problem treated, it will usually get worse. Once you have been diagnosed with this problem, you will usually be started on a medication & bladder training. It may take at least 6 weeks to see if this treatment will help improve your symptoms.

The goal of this treatment plan is teach your bladder to hold more urine before giving you the urge to empty your bladder. We will accomplish this by gradually increasing the time between your voids. Our goals are to help you get to your desired voiding interval, reduce the number of times which you have to get up at night to empty your bladder, and to decrease any accidental loss of urine which you may be having. This treatment can often allow you to reduce or eliminate the medications which you may be taking for bladder control!

### Instructions for Bladder Training

1. You and your doctor or nurse will determine an initial interval between your voids- usually between 60 to 90 minutes.
2. Begin your schedule every morning when you get up and continue the schedule until you go to bed. No voiding goals are scheduled for your sleeping hours, although most women have to get up at least once overnight to void.
3. If you have the urge to empty your bladder before your scheduled time, make every effort to wait until your goal. Try to relax, distract yourself, and suppress the urge.
4. Try to empty your bladder according to your schedule as much as possible, even if you do not feel like you have to go. If you skip a void, return to your schedule as soon as possible.
6. You should try to increase your voiding interval by 15 to 30 minutes each week if possible. Don't get frustrated if you don't reach your goal immediately. This condition takes years to develop, & most women will achieve their desired goal in 4 to 8 weeks. If you can get 2 - 3 hours between your voids, you are doing well.

**Notes:**

- You may find it helpful to avoid some substances which may irritate your bladder such as coffee, tea, and soda pop which contains caffeine.
- You also should not force yourself to drink more or less fluids than you need - just drink enough to satisfy your thirst.
- Watch your fluid intake after dinner.
- Wearing support hose for part of the day may help reduce night time voids by decreasing lower leg and ankle swelling during the daytime.

Thank you for helping us with your treatment- we know that this is a lot of work; but the end result is worth it.

**FOLLOW-UP**

Once you have had the bladder testing we have established the diagnosis. The good news is that you will not usually need to have the test done again, & your follow-up will be by telephone, or with a brief check-up in the office.

You will be asked to report how you are doing with your treatment in terms of how often you are using the bathroom during the day & the night & how often you are losing urine.

Depending on how you are doing, we may change your medication. Sometimes you can reduce your dose, use the medication on an as needed basis, like when you are going out for a while, or even get off the medications completely.

In 4 weeks please call the nurse as noted at 828.670.5665 (extension 313 or 315) & tell her the following:

1. The medicine & dose you are taking.
2. Whether you feel it is helping or not.
3. How often you are going to the bathroom during the day (every 2 hours, 3 hours, etc)
4. How many times you get up at night to empty.
5. How often you are having leakage.
6. How many pads you are using (if any).

The nurse will review this information with the doctor & make a recommendation about your treatment.

**Good Luck!**