



ActivStyle does not intend to dispense medical advice nor offer diagnostic information. Readers should consult their physician or other medical professional for clarification and treatment advice.

Overactive bladder (OAB) is the result of a malfunction of the detrusor muscle (the layered, smooth muscle that surrounds the bladder) and is characterized by an urge to urinate and often, excessive urination as well. The detrusor muscle contracts spastically, resulting in sustained, high bladder pressure that causes the urgent need to urinate.

However, in people with OAB, they do not necessarily experience urge incontinence, and OAB does not include stress incontinence. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, OAB affects nearly 13 million men and women.

Symptoms of OAB may include:

- frequent urination—13 or more times a day or 2 or more times at night
- urinary urgency—the sudden need to urinate immediately
- urge incontinence—uncontrollable urge to urinate quickly followed by expulsion of urine without time to get to the bathroom

Underlying causes of OAB may include: nerve damage caused by abdominal trauma, pelvic trauma, or surgery, bladder stones, side effects of some medication, and neurological diseases such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, or stroke.

Common Symptoms of Overactive Bladder (OAB)

The following are common symptoms of OAB. However, it is best to talk with a physician so that s/he can make an accurate diagnosis.

- » Sudden, uncontrollable urge to urinate or not having enough time to get to the bathroom after realizing your bladder is full
- » Urinating two or more times during sleep time
- » Needing to urinate more than 12 times in a 24-hour period
- » Leaking urine before reaching the bathroom
- » Feeling anxious about leaking urine

Anxiety produced by or avoidance of any of the following may also indicate OAB:

- » Meeting friends or family out of the home
- » Being stuck in traffic or taking long trips
- » Using public transportation
- » Sitting through long meetings, movies, sporting events
- » Keeping a bottle or jug in your car for urinating
- » Using panty liners or pads to prevent leakage
- » Not knowing where the closest restroom is