



## DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

# Managing Overactive Bladder

Overactive bladder (OAB) is a condition characterized by excessive need to urinate as well as problems with bladder control. It's important to come to your doctor prepared to learn and discuss how you're feeling. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

## Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

<b>Bladder</b>	This is a hollow organ in the body that holds urine right before you urinate. In cases of OAB, you often feel as if you need to empty it, even when it's not full.
<b>Urinary Tract</b>	The urinary tract is a term for the parts of the body associated with removing urine from the body. This includes the two kidneys, two ureters (tubes which connect the kidneys to the bladder), the bladder, and the urethra—the final duct that expels the urine.
<b>Urgency Incontinence</b>	This is a term for one of the primary symptoms of OAB, which is a sudden, intense urge to urinate, accompanied by an involuntary loss of bladder control. This also leads to a frequent need to urinate.
<b>Nocturia</b>	Another symptom of OAB, this is defined as a frequent need to urinate at night. While it's normal to wake up once at night to go to the bathroom, the need to do so more frequently can be a sign of problems.
<b>Prostate</b>	In men, the prostate is a walnut-sized gland located just beneath the bladder and above the penis. Some cases of OAB are caused by enlarged prostate obstructing the bladder.
<b>Urinalysis</b>	Among the tests needed for diagnosis is urinalysis (also known as “urinary analysis”). This involves assessing the color, content, and concentration of your urine as doctors look at the appearance and test relative acidity, protein, sugar, and blood levels, among other important measures.
<b>Urinary Culture</b>	This is a test of bacteria levels in your urine, taken from a sample that you provide. This allows doctors to determine if urinary tract infection—or another kind—is causing issues.
<b>Uroflowmetry</b>	Another test helpful in diagnosis is uroflowmetry, which is an assessment of urine flow and duration. It's non-invasive—you urinate into a special funnel connected to a monitor—and can be very helpful in assessing bladder and sphincter function.
<b>Kegel Exercises</b>	Among the more frequent lifestyle management approaches to OAB are exercises that focus on the Kegel muscles located on the pelvic floor. These exercises essentially involve sets of flexing as if you're holding in pee for 10 seconds at a time.
<b>Anticholinergic Drugs</b>	Also known as antimuscarinics, these represent the class of medications that are prescribed for OAB.



### Questions to Ask

These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage your overactive bladder.

#### About Symptoms

- Are these symptoms OAB or might I have another condition?
- Can I expect my symptoms to get worse?
- How long should I expect symptoms to last after I start treatment?

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#### About Causes & Risk Factors

- What underlying condition do you think is causing my OAB?
- Are any of my lifestyle behaviors causing the issue or making it worse?

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#### About Diagnosis

- What tests will I need to take to find out what's causing my OAB?
- What can I do to prepare for diagnosis and testing?
- How long before I get my test results?

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#### About Treatment

- What are the options for treatment of my OAB, and how do they compare?
- What are the side-effects of the medications you're prescribing?
- Do I need a specialist for my care?

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#### About Living With Overactive Bladder

- What can I do at home to manage symptoms?
- Are there any physical activities or other behaviors I should watch out for?
- What are the signs I should call for medical help?

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