

Urine Symptoms in men

SELF-CARE FORUM FACT SHEET NO. 14

This page helps you understand what's 'normal' and what you can do to help yourself if you are affected by urinary symptoms, such as peeing very often, getting up at night more than once or twice to pee, a slow pee stream (or a slow start), leaking urine (incontinence), or having to rush to the toilet a lot of the time. It also tells you when to become concerned and seek advice from a health professional.

Useful facts

How common are urine symptoms?

Many men develop problems with storing or passing urine (urinary symptoms) as they get older. Up to half of adult men have some urinary symptoms up to the age of 40, while 66 out of 100 men between 40 and 60 and over 75 out of 100 men aged over 60 experience them.

What causes urine symptoms?

Many men with urine symptoms worry about prostate cancer. But an enlarged prostate (called benign prostatic hyperplasia) is much more common. Having an enlarged prostate does not mean you have prostate cancer – they are separate conditions, though both become more common with age. Not all urinary symptoms are caused by the prostate gland. Other causes include diabetes, urinary-tract infections (UTIs), sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and bladder cancer. Bladder cancer is less common but can cause similar symptoms, which is why it's important to see your GP if symptoms are new or changing.

What can I expect to happen?

Depending on the underlying cause, urinary symptoms can be short-term (for example if caused by a urinary-tract infection) or long-term (if caused by a long-term underlying condition).

While there may not always be a cure for urine symptoms, changes in lifestyle (such as reducing caffeine-containing drinks) and treatments (such as medicines) can help manage urinary symptoms.

Treatment for urinary symptoms

Treatment for urinary problems depends on the underlying cause and is often aimed at improving symptoms. A member of your pharmacy team or your GP can advise.

So, if you're not too concerned by your symptoms, you can often manage urine symptoms by making a few changes to your lifestyle (see section on "what can I do to get myself better now and in the future?").

Over the counter (OTC) products: Tamsulosin can be bought at pharmacies. It can help if an enlarged prostate is causing a slow urinary stream. See your GP within 6 weeks of starting this medicine if you buy it yourself, to make sure it is ok for you to continue. Avoid herbal medicines until you've spoken to your doctor or community pharmacist, as some can interact with prescribed medicines or make urinary symptoms worse.

Incontinence products can help manage symptoms day-to-day, but many causes of leaking urine are treatable – so it's worth speaking to your GP or pharmacist before assuming you have to live with it.

If you're worried about the possibility of prostate cancer, your GP may discuss a blood test for prostate specific antigen (PSA) with you.

[More information about "Tamsulosin" is on the NHS website here.](#)



What can I do to help myself now and in the future?

Keep a drink diary: Look at what you drink during a typical day. It can be useful to keep a diary for a few days, making a note of:

- what you drink (for example tea, coffee, alcohol, or water)
- the amount you drink (use a measuring jug or estimate the volume – a typical mug holds approximately 250mls)
- the time of day when you drink

Fluid intake: Aim to drink between 1500 and 2000mls per day ((this can vary with heat, exercise, and health conditions). Many people think that they need to drink large amounts of fluid each day for good health, but this is untrue and will often make urinary symptoms worse.

Avoid stimulants: If you drink large amounts of tea, coffee, fizzy drinks or alcohol, try cutting these down as they can increase urinary symptoms. Even decaffeinated tea or coffee can cause problems, so try switching to mainly water, fruit juice, squash or herbal teas and see how this impacts on your symptoms.

Avoid drinks before bedtime: If you wake during sleep to pee and you find this troubling, look at your fluid intake before you go to bed. Try to decrease the amount of drinks before you go to sleep, and particularly avoid tea, coffee and alcohol. This can make a big difference.

Massage: If you leak urine into your underwear after peeing, this simple technique may help: press upwards on the area between the sack containing your testicles and your back passage after peeing and massage gently upwards and forwards – this can push out the last bit of urine and prevent leakage.

Bladder training: If you pee too frequently or have to rush to go to the toilet, consider some simple bladder training techniques. See “where to find out more?” for links.

Exercise more: Increasing your level of physical exercise and losing weight can reduce urinary symptoms and also improve other aspects of your health.

When to seek help

Seek urgent help (same day or call 111) if you:

- see blood in your urine
- cannot pass urine at all
- have severe pain alongside urinary symptoms

Make a routine GP appointment if you:

- develop new urinary symptoms, particularly if they worsen quickly or last for more than two weeks.
- have cloudy or smelly urine, or if peeing stings (this may suggest infection).
- find your urinary symptoms troubling and OTC medicines don't help.
- leak urine (called incontinence).
- have difficulty with erections – this can share the same underlying cause as urinary symptoms and is worth discussing with your GP.
- worry about prostate cancer, particularly if this runs in your family.
- notice unexplained weight loss, fatigue, or back pain alongside urinary symptoms.

Where to find out more

Further information is available from:

Free bowel and bladder app offering practical information and self-care guidance for bladder and bowel leakage

- [Expert Self Care – CONFidence App](#)

Prostate

- [Prostate Cancer UK](#)
- [Your Prostate To discuss any problems with a specialist nurse, you can call a free helpline on 0800 074 8383.](#)

NHS Websites

- [NHS Inform Scotland](#)
- [NI Direct, NI](#)
- [NHS111, Wales](#)
- [NHS Website - UTIs](#)

Bladder Exercises

- [BAUS - Bladder training in men](#)

