

IT'S TIME  
TO TALK  
ABOUT OAB

# Talking with Your Healthcare Professional about Overactive Bladder

Are you having urinary problems, but don't know what to tell your healthcare professional? You may have Overactive Bladder—and you aren't alone. Millions of people live with urinary problems for years without asking for help. Don't wait. Learn more about Overactive Bladder (OAB), and make an appointment with your healthcare professional. Then start talking!

Here are some tips to help you get started:

- ▶ **Be prepared:** Before your visit with your healthcare professional, gather some important information. Bring a list of the prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and/or herbs you take. And make a list of all your past and current illnesses or injuries. You may also want to go to [ItsTimeToTalkAboutOAB.org](http://ItsTimeToTalkAboutOAB.org) and take the "Think You Have OAB?" Quiz. Bring the results to your visit to help you discuss your symptoms with your healthcare professional.
- ▶ **Bring a friend:** If you are comfortable, ask a relative or friend to go with you to your appointment. An "appointment buddy" can help remind you of things you may have forgotten to ask, and be a second set of ears to help you remember what your healthcare professional said.
- ▶ **Introduce the topic:** If your healthcare professional doesn't ask you about your OAB symptoms, bring the topic up yourself. Don't wait until the end of your visit. Start talking early so there will be plenty of time for questions. If you see a nurse first, talk about your symptoms even before your doctor enters the exam room.
- ▶ **Take notes:** Bring a pad of paper and a pen to take notes.
- ▶ **Speak freely:** Tell your healthcare professional about your symptoms. You may be embarrassed; but remember, your healthcare professional is used to hearing about all kinds of problems.
- ▶ **Talk about how your symptoms have changed your life:** Tell your healthcare professional not only what symptoms you have, but how they have affected your everyday life. This information can help you and your healthcare professional decide which treatment choices could be best for you. Before your visit, ask yourself these questions and share your answers with your healthcare professional:
  - Are my symptoms stopping me from enjoying activities outside of my home?
  - Am I afraid to be too far away from a restroom?
  - Have my symptoms changed my relationships with friends or family?
  - Do my symptoms make it hard to get a good night's sleep?
- ▶ **Ask questions:** Understanding more about OAB is the best way to take control of the problem. A visit to your healthcare professional is the right time to ask questions. Use the list of questions on the back of this page as a guide.
- ▶ **Talk about follow-up care:** Finally, ask your healthcare professional when you should make a second appointment. And ask what you should bring with you to that visit.



### Questions to Ask Your Healthcare Professional:

- ▶ What is Overactive Bladder (OAB)?
- ▶ What causes OAB?
- ▶ Can you prevent OAB?
- ▶ Can you help me or do I need to see an incontinence specialist? If so, how can I find the right one for me?
- ▶ Will I need to have tests to find out if I have OAB?
- ▶ Would you explain each test, and why you are recommending them?
- ▶ Are there any risks from having these tests?
- ▶ What types of treatment are available for OAB?
- ▶ Are there side effects from treatment?
- ▶ What are the pros and cons of each type of treatment?
- ▶ What treatment do you recommend for me and why?
- ▶ How soon after treatment will my symptoms improve?
- ▶ What side effects should I watch out for, and when should I call you?
- ▶ What happens if the first treatment doesn't help?
- ▶ Will I need treatment for the rest of my life?
- ▶ Can you "cure" OAB?
- ▶ Are there any exercises I can do to help my symptoms?
- ▶ Do I need to see a physical therapist?
- ▶ Are there any lifestyle changes I can make that could help my symptoms?
- ▶ What are the risks of not treating OAB?
- ▶ If I don't have OAB, what other problem could be causing my symptoms, and why?
- ▶ What's my next step?

***Get the facts. Get diagnosed. Take control.***

**ItsTimeToTalkAboutOAB.org**

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