

Types of Incontinence

Nocturia

What is it?

Nocturia is the need to wake up and pass urine more than once per night. Wakening should be related to bladder and not secondary to environmental such as being too hot, cold, noise disturbance or inability to sleep for other reasons. Nocturia is not the same as nocturnal enuresis, where urine is passed involuntarily during sleep.

Symptoms

This is a symptom not a diagnosis. Therefore the root cause of this symptom should be fully assessed and understood in order to manage it effectively.

What treatment is available?

- The treatment for this condition relies on accurate and comprehensive assessment and treatment of the cause of the nocturia.
- Treatment will be aimed at minimising sleep disturbance and deprivation that can be a disabling outcome impacting negatively on the individuals' quality of life.
- Look at type, amount and timing of fluids – including gradually reducing caffeine. It is recommended that the last drink of fluids should be 2-3 hours before bed (see also information leaflet: Impact of Fluids on the Bladder)
- Is the individual drinking more fluids when they wake? Advise to avoid drinking fluids when awake – if mouth is dry, advise to rinse mouth with water
- Encouraging good toileting habits like double-voiding is likely to help.
- Looking for environmental causes for the individual to wake during the night (e.g. too hot, too cold, noisy) and signage
- Could the individual be constipated? This can result in lower urinary output during the day and more at night.
- Consider the individual's mental state – are they anxious or depressed?
- Review medications – could side effects/interactions be contributing to the problem? Can changes be made? Discuss with doctor
- If the cause is fluid retention due to heart failure, timing of diuretics can be crucial (discuss with doctor).
- Encouraging the individual to lie on their bed for a couple of hours during the afternoon, as this will aid re-absorption of fluid from the extremities and reduce fluid build-up before bedtime.

See Hints and Tips leaflets: -

- Impact of Fluids on the Bladder
- Successful Bladder Emptying
- Constipation and Laxatives
- Medication Impact on the Bladder

See also: -

NICE Clinical Guidance - Urinary Incontinence in Women: Management

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg171>

NICE Clinical Guidance – Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms in Men: Management

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg97>