



Rushing to the Bathroom Again?

You're Not Alone

Every day thousands of Canadians of all ages begin their day by “washroom mapping” their schedule – making hard decisions about their work and social life based on whether or not they can get to a bathroom in time.

Overactive bladder can be a disruptive and annoying stress that no one should have to worry about. Unfortunately, the urge to suffer silently can be as strong as the need to find a bathroom. It shouldn't be. Understanding the symptoms and talking about it are important first steps in taking control. **Read on.**



"I just learned to live with OAB but it really made life difficult. My friends and family couldn't understand why I stopped doing a lot of the things I loved – taking dance lessons, doing tai chi in the park, taking the grandchildren for long walks. Then I let it slip out when I was talking to my doctor. I had no idea my condition could be treated. The treatment helped me so I'd encourage anyone with an overactive bladder to talk to their doctor." – S. Rudko

Overactive Bladder – also known as OAB – is more common than many people realize. An estimated 1 in 5 Canadians over the age of 35, suffer from Overactive Bladder (OAB) problems. If you're within that twenty percent of people spending too much time racing to the bathroom, you might have Overactive Bladder. The good news is that, in most cases, OAB can be successfully managed and treated. OAB is not a natural part of growing older and it is not a normal condition at any age.

WHAT IS OVERACTIVE BLADDER?

OAB occurs when the large muscle in the bladder, the detrusor muscle, contracts involuntarily. This causes a sudden and sometimes overwhelming urge to urinate, even when the bladder is not full. A person with OAB typically needs to urinate more than eight times over 24 hours. Other symptoms include waking up to pee two or more times in the night, and sometimes leaking before reaching the washroom in time.

Loss of bladder control is sometimes called "leaking" or urinary incontinence, which can be one of the symptoms of OAB.

might be an option, but is usually not considered until behavioral therapy and medications are tried.

The first approach to treating OAB often involves a conservative lifestyle change and physical therapy.

IN THE MEANTIME ...

You may already be using one or more of a variety of absorbent products, including shields, pads, and undergarments to manage urinary incontinence. There are also devices that can be worn internally by women, to support the bladder and improve control.

TAKING CONTROL

Now that you have a better understanding of OAB and its symptoms, the next step is to talk to your doctor. Together you can determine the cause of your bladder problem and most appropriate treatment. Your doctor might suggest lifestyle changes, exercise, physical therapy, medications – or a combination of treatment possibilities. In some cases, surgery



