

## **Nocturia or Frequent Urination at Night**

A frequent need to get up and go to the bathroom to urinate at night is called nocturia. It differs from enuresis, or bedwetting, in which the person does not arouse from sleep, but the bladder empties anyway. Nocturia is a common cause of sleep loss, especially among older adults.

Most people without nocturia can sleep for 6 to 8 hours without having to urinate. Some researchers believe that one event per night is within normal limits; two or more events per night may be associated with daytime tiredness. Patients with severe nocturia may get up five or six times during the night to go to the bathroom.

Nocturia is often a symptom of other medical conditions including urological infection, a tumor of the bladder or prostate, a condition called bladder prolapse, or disorders affecting sphincter control. It is also common in people with heart failure, liver failure, poorly controlled diabetes mellitus, or diabetes insipidus. Diabetes, pregnancy and diuretic medications are also associated with nocturia.

Until recently, nocturia was thought to be caused by a full bladder, but it is also a symptom of sleep apnea.

Nocturia becomes more common as we age. As we get older, our bodies produce less of an anti-diuretic hormone that enables us to retain fluid. With decreased concentrations of this hormone, we produce more urine at night. Another reason for nocturia among the elderly is that the bladder tends to lose holding capacity as we age. Finally, older people are more likely to suffer from medical problems that may have an effect on the bladder.

### **How Many People Have Nocturia?**

Nearly two-thirds (65%) of those responding to NSF's 2003 *Sleep in America* poll of adults between the ages of 55 and 84 reported this disturbance at least a few nights per week.

### **Symptoms**

Nocturia or frequent nighttime urination may occur only occasionally or nightly. Symptoms of nocturia include excessive urination (need to urinate too much fluid), frequent urination (too many visits to the bathroom for various reasons), urinary urgency (need to urinate sometimes without much result), or reduced urine. Nocturia may result when a person's normal "body clock" allows for daytime urination pattern to occur at night. Sometimes, nocturia may simply be the result of drinking too many fluids, especially caffeine, before going to bed.

### **Treatment**

If you are experiencing nocturia, consult your doctor as soon as possible and follow his or her recommended therapy. It may be helpful to keep a diary of times and amounts of urine voided to bring with you to the doctor. Also, bring a record of your sleep habits as well as any daytime fatigue you may be experiencing. After an initial evaluation, your doctor may prescribe medications, diagnostic testing such as urinalysis, cystometry (a measurement of the pressure

within the bladder), neurological tests (for some urgency problems), or ultrasound, or refer you to a sleep center for testing.

## Living with Nocturia

If you believe you are suffering from nocturia, these tips may help:

- Drink your normal amount of liquid but do so earlier in the day.
- Cut down on any drinks in the last two hours before you go to bed - especially alcohol, coffee or tea as these stimulate urine production.
- Keep a diary of how much you drink, what you drink, and when. This may be helpful in identifying situations which may make the nocturia worse.

While there is limited scientific research and no proof of their effectiveness, some people believe that homeopathic medicines, hypnosis or acupuncture can be beneficial. Be sure to seek advice from a trained practitioner.

*Content from:*



<http://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-disorders-problems/nocturia>