



WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES AND BEHAVIOR ON BLADDER CONTROL PROBLEMS - ARE YOU 'COPING' WITH SYMPTOMS?

By Robert Pugach, MD

Bladder control problems are one of the most common health concerns for women. More than 50 million American women experience one or more bladder control symptoms like frequency, urgency, stress or urge urinary incontinence and nocturia (nighttime urination), yet they often are too embarrassed to inquire about treatment or are unaware of possible bladder control solutions.

A study conducted by the American Academy of Family Practice surveyed women and conducted focus groups to understand women's perspectives and coping mechanisms to manage their symptoms. The focus groups revealed that many women were not aware that overactive bladder (OAB) is a chronic condition. In the study, approximately 30% of respondents in the survey felt uncomfortable talking to their doctor about their condition. The study also showed that for women who did speak with their doctors, their stress-related symptoms were described more fully than urge-related symptoms. Another significant finding was that the women felt their OAB medication was ineffective, and half (50%) stopped taking their medication within 1 year!

At **Pacific Coast Urology Medical Center's Female Bladder Control Center of Excellence**, both Evans Tran, PA, and I understand our pa-

tients' embarrassment and reluctance to discuss this issue. We spend the necessary time to communicate with our patients, help them feel comfortable discussing bladder control issues and educate them on the different types of bladder control problems and their symptoms.

We explain to women that bladder control problems can be referred to as incontinence when there is uncontrolled leakage of urine that occurs with movement, exercise, coughing, sneezing, laughing or sudden strong urges to urinate that cannot be stopped. These types of incontinence include, stress, urge, mixed, overflow and intrinsic sphincter deficiency.

Bladder control problems can be present without urine leakage. This is called an overactive bladder (OAB) condition. Symptoms include, frequent urges to urinate, feeling an urgent need to urinate and nighttime urination. OAB affects a woman's

sleep and daily activities. It can literally control your life.

We can help! We encourage women to stop being embarrassed and obtain a precise diagnosis and treatment plan that includes treatment options other than medications and just "coping" with your symptoms. Schedule a confidential consultation to learn about the variety of advanced non-surgical treatment options, including acupuncture, biofeedback, Botox® injections, Interstim® and pelvic floor rehabilitation exercises.



To learn more about bladder control solutions, call 888-735-4336 for an appointment.