

Information for Women about Urinary Incontinence and Vaginal Prolapse

MEDICATIONS FOR URGE INCONTINENCE

Medications used to treat urgency and urge incontinence work to relax the overactive bladder and reduce the unwanted bladder contractions. Medications are NOT available for stress incontinence or prolapse. Medications may decrease episodes of urge incontinence by 50-60%. If it is successful, medication is a long term treatment. You will only see improvement as long as you are taking the medication.

There are several different medications that can be used for urge incontinence. You may see improvement within a few days. Your condition may keep improving for up to a month after starting the medication.

The number of medications for urge incontinence has increased over the last 10 years, and more options will become available with time. If initial medical treatment is not satisfactory, discuss other options with your care provider.

Types of medication

Oxybutinin is a common medication for incontinence. Your doctor will probably recommend it first. If you respond to oxybutinin, your doctor can adjust the dose to your

Drug	Trade name
oxybutinin	Ditropan, Ditropan XL, Uromax, Oxytrol Gelnique
tolterodine	Detrol LA
fesoterodine	Toviaz
darafenacin	Enablex
solifenacin	Vesicare
tropium	Trosec
mirabegron	Mirbetriq

symptoms. It might take some time and patience to find the right dose.

Oxybutinin is fast acting and lasts about 8 hours, so it is sometimes used on an as needed basis (such as when you are going out, going to work or traveling). If symptoms are only bothersome at night, you may use it before going to bed. If symptoms are only bothersome in the day, you may use it in the morning or twice per day.

Your doctor will ask you if you have any side effects from the oxybutinin. If there are side effects, or if the medication is not helping, there are other medications you can try. Don't hesitate to tell your doctor if you have any concerns.

Managing medications:

If your medication is doing a good job of controlling your incontinence, you may choose to live with some of the side effects. Most side effects are not serious, and will go away when the medication is stopped.

The most common side effect of this type of medication is dry mouth. Some people notice dry eyes or nasal passages. Dry mouth may be reduced by lowering the dose or trying things that improve the flow of saliva (sugarless gum or candy and over the counter saliva substitute sprays or gels). Constipation, stomach upset and drowsiness can also occur.

Your doctor will not prescribe this type of medication for you if you have certain underlying medical conditions. These include gastroparesis (a problem emptying the stomach), some types of glaucoma, rhythm problems of the heart, or dementia. If these problems start when you are using the medication, stop taking it and see your doctor.