

Overactive Bladder Medications

Multiple medicines are available for the treatment of overactive bladder (OAB). Most of these are in the anti-cholinergic family. They have similar effectiveness and side effects (constipation, dry mouth, vision changes, and altered mentation). If one medication works for you, but has intolerable side effects, switching to another medicine in the same family may relieve this.

Anti-Cholinergic Medications

- Ditropan (oxybutynin)
- Vesicare (solifenacin)
- Toviaz (fesoterodine)
- Detrol (tolterodine)
- Enablex (darifenacin)
- Sanctura (trospium)
- Gelnique (oxybutynin)
- Oxytrol (oxybutynin)

The topical forms (Gelnique and Oxytrol) tend to have fewer side effects, but may have less potency. The over-the-counter lower-potency anticholinergic (Oxytrol) is not generally covered by insurance and may have higher out of pocket costs.

Myrbetriq (Mirabegron) is a newer OAB drug that is not in the anticholinergic family. It does not cause dry mouth or constipation, but can have effects of hypertension. Because there is no generic form, insurance may not cover it or there may be higher co-pay. Insurance may require that anti-cholinergic medicines have been tried first and were unsuccessful for you.

Things to understand about meds:

They all work about the same, though side effects may differ. If medicines aren't helping adequately:

- Combining meds with behavioral therapies may be an advantage over either alone
- Changing the time of day you take the medication can sometimes help
- Once-daily meds usually have fewer side effects than meds requiring more doses
- Upping the dose may be recommended if the side effects are not too bad
- Changing to a different med might help if there are benefits, but intolerable side effects
- If there is no benefit and the side effects are bothersome, meds are not the answer
- **If you have tried two or more meds without adequate relief, it is time to seek other solutions for your problem. You should be discussing these options with your doctor.**