



The British Association of Urological Surgeons

Nocturnal polyuria

Passing too much pee at night

You have this leaflet because you pass a lot of urine at night. The aim of this leaflet is to give you information about why this happens and what you can do about it. Expert doctors in the UK have written it. Please also remember the advice your own doctor or nurse has already given you.

Key points

- Some people make too much pee during the night. We call this nocturnal polyuria.
- Doctors say it is nocturnal polyuria when more than one-third of your daily pee comes out during the night.
- This can happen because of other health problems. These include:
 - trouble with breathing while sleeping
 - swollen ankles
 - problems with the heart
 - some types of medicine
- You can try simple things to help:
 - Drink less in the evening.
 - Don't eat watery foods in the evening.
 - Put your feet up in the evening. This is important if you have swollen ankles.
 - Do gentle exercise, such as walking.
- If these steps do not help, speak to your GP.
- Some people may need medicine to help.

Why do I pee a lot at night?

There are many reasons why you might wake up at night to pee. These include:

- not sleeping well
- drinking too much before bed
- problems with your bladder or prostate
- making too much pee at night. We call this nocturnal polyuria
- a mix of these things

Your brain has a small gland called the pituitary gland. This gland makes a chemical called ADH. This stands for antidiuretic hormone. It tells your kidneys to make less pee while you sleep.

When you are young, your body makes less than one-fifth of your daily pee at night. As you get older, this goes up to less than one-third. If you make more than one-third of your daily pee at night, this is called nocturnal polyuria.

There are a few reasons why this might happen:

- Your body may not make enough ADH. This can happen as you get older.
- You may drink too much liquid in the evening.
- You may eat foods that hold a lot of water. This is food like fruit, salad, pasta or rice.
- Your body may hold on to water during the day and try to get rid of it at night.

Some people notice their ankles look swollen in the evening. This often gets better by the morning. When you lie down, the water in your legs moves back into your bloodstream. Your kidneys then turn this water into pee. This can fill your bladder and wake you up during the night.

Sometimes, making too much pee at night is linked to other problems. These may be heart or breathing problems, such as sleep apnoea. Your doctor may ask you to have more tests.

What will my doctor ask me to do?

To work out the problem, your doctor may ask you to fill in a chart. This is called a bladder diary.

You will need to write down:

- how much you drink
- how much pee you pass
- what time you drink and pee

You will need to measure your pee using a jug. This is so the doctor knows how much you are making.

What can I do to help myself?

Your doctor will ask about what you eat and drink in the evening. They will check if your ankles are swollen. There are some things you can try at home:

- Drink less in the evening.
- Eat watery foods earlier in the day. This is food like fruit and salad.
- If your ankles are swollen, put your feet up. Do this especially in the evening.
- Try to walk more during the day. This helps move extra water back into your blood.

What if these steps do not help?

If these steps do not work, and other causes have been checked or treated, your doctor may try:

- **Water tablets.** This medicine helps your kidneys make more pee. Take it about 6 hours before bed. It may help your body get rid of extra water in the evening instead of at night.
- **Manmade ADH.** You take this as a tablet or a nose spray. You have it before bedtime. ADH should be used with care. It can make your body hold on to too much water. This can be a problem if you have heart trouble or high blood pressure. It can also lower the salt in your blood too much. This is more likely if you are over 65.

What if I am still worried?

If you have any concerns, talk to your GP, specialist nurse or doctor who treats bladders.

Important

We have worked hard to make this leaflet clear and correct. But it cannot replace advice from your own doctor or nurse. Always ask them if you are worried or unsure.

What should I do with this leaflet?

You can keep this leaflet. If you have more questions, ask your doctor or nurse. They can explain more.

Online access

You can see this leaflet on the internet.

Scan the special picture (QR code).



or

<https://rb.gy/ebqf2i>

Feedback

We'd love to know what you think! You can share your thoughts by emailing us at

admin@baus.org.uk
