

Managing Urinary Symptoms

Radiation to your pelvis can cause urinary symptoms, such as urgency, frequency, decreased flow, or pain with urination. These symptoms may be caused by inflammation of the bladder or prostate. If you are suffering from any urinary symptom, it is very important to continue eating and drinking to maintain your weight and avoid dehydration. Please follow the recommendations below in the order given, starting with Step 1. If your symptoms are not controlled by the recommendation, then proceed to the next step.

Inflammatory Symptoms of Your Bladder (for example, urgency, frequency, pain)

Step 1: Take Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen, both over-the-counter medications

1. Ibuprofen (Trade names include Motrin, Advil, Nuprin)

- Take 400 mg (2 tablets) twice a day with food.
- Warning: Do not take ibuprofen if you have a history of gastritis, ulcers, or aspirin allergies. Stop if you experience heartburn or stomach irritation and notify your medical team.

OR

2. Acetaminophen (Trade name includes Tylenol)

- For patients who cannot tolerate ibuprofen.
- Take 500 mg (1 extra-strength tablet) up to 4 times a day.
- Warning: Do not take if you have liver disease or if you are on other acetaminophen-containing drugs.

Step 2: Take Phenazopyridine (Pyridium), an over-the-counter medication

- Pyridium acts as a topical numbing agent within the bladder.
- Take 1 tablet (200 mg) by mouth 3 times a day after meals.
- Warning: It will turn your urine orange and may stain your undergarments. Do not use if you have kidney disease.

Step 3: Consider Oxybutynin Chloride (Ditropan), a prescription medication

- Use for symptoms of an overactive bladder.
- Recommended dose is 5 mg by mouth 2-4 times a day.
- Warning: May cause dizziness and light-headedness.

Obstructive Symptoms in Men (for example, frequency, decreased flow, hesitancy)

Step 1: Consider Terazosin (Hytrin), a prescription medication

- Start out at 1-2 mg by mouth at night and your physician may increase the dose gradually depending on your response to the medication.
- Warning: Please notify your medical team if you develop symptoms of light-headedness or if you are already on medications for blood pressure.

Step 2: Consider Tamsulosin (Flomax), a prescription medication

- Start at 1 tablet (0.4 mg) thirty minutes after dinner up to 2 tablets per evening.
- Warning: Please notify your medical team if you develop symptoms of light-headedness or if you are already on medications for blood pressure.