



1

Nocturia

The underlined terms are listed in the glossary.

What is nocturia?

Nocturia is waking up one or more times during the night because of the need to urinate.

This means that if you wake up during the night — for instance because you are thirsty, hear noises, worry, or feel pain — and you decide to visit the toilet in the meantime, you do not have nocturia. You also do not suffer from nocturia if you go to the toilet first thing in the morning.



Interesting Fact

While nocturia literally means “urination at night”, it may also occur during the day, for those who work night shifts and sleep in the daytime.

Waking up once in a while to urinate is common and is generally not very bothersome. However, if you regularly wake up two or more times a night, it can affect your quality of life and general health. The more times you wake up each night, the more it impacts your wellbeing.

Nocturia disrupts your sleep and may cause you to be more tired than usual during the day. This can make it difficult to concentrate at work and carry out your daily activities. Your lower energy levels could also affect your social life.

How common is nocturia?

Nocturia affects both men and women, and becomes more common as you grow older. In adults under 30, more women than men suffer from nocturia while over the age of 50, it affects men more often. Over the age of 60, the chances of suffering from nocturia rapidly increase for men and women alike.

What causes nocturia?

- In some people the kidneys produce too much urine. If the kidneys only overproduce at night, this is called nocturnal polyuria
- There are several conditions which can cause overproduction of urine, such as diabetes type I or II or primary polydipsia, the sensation that your mouth is dry which leads you to drink too much
- Some people have a smaller bladder which is filled to capacity more quickly and cannot store the urine all night
- If you have a bladder or prostate condition, such as benign prostatic enlargement (BPE), you may not be able to empty your bladder completely before going to bed. As a result, the bladder fills more quickly and may not store the urine all night

Other possible causes of nocturia are:

- Overactive Bladder Symptoms (OAB, see EAU Patient Information on Overactive Bladder)
- A decrease in the production of the hormone vasopressin
- Obstructive sleep apnoea, or snoring
- Swelling of the ankles and legs, a condition known as peripheral oedema
- Lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS)
- Congestive heart failure

Understanding what causes your nocturia will help your doctor to offer the best possible treatment option for your individual situation.

This information was updated in January 2014.

This leaflet is part of EAU Patient Information on Nocturia. It contains general information about nocturia. If you have any specific questions about your individual medical situation you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider.

This information was produced by the European Association of Urology (EAU). The content of this leaflet is in line with the EAU Guidelines.

You can find this and other information on urological diseases at our website: <http://patients.uroweb.org>

Series contributors:

Prof. Christopher Chapple	Sheffield, United Kingdom
Dr. Jean-Nicolas Cornu	Paris, France
Prof. Stavros Gravas	Larissa, Greece
Dr. Diane Newman	Philadelphia, United States
Prof. Andreas Skolarikos	Athens, Greece
Mr. Nikesh Thiruchelvam	Cambridge, United Kingdom