

## What matters most to you?

Your feelings are just as important as medical facts. Think about what matters most to you. Choose the statement in each section that describes your feelings the best.

### Check:

- **True** under the statement that best fits your feelings.
- **Equally true** if both statements describe how you feel.
- **Neither is true** if neither statement describes how you feel.
- **I don't know** if you are unsure.

### Reasons to take medications

I have tried lifestyle changes, but they are not helping enough.  
 True

Equally true  
 Neither is true  
 I don't know

I need the incontinence to stop now. It is hurting my life.  
 True

Equally true  
 Neither is true  
 I don't know

I am not concerned about the cost of the medication.  
 True

Equally true  
 Neither is true  
 I don't know

I am not worried about the side effects of the medication.  
 True

Equally true  
 Neither is true  
 I don't know

I am not worried about the risk of future dementia.  
 True

Equally true  
 Neither is true  
 I don't know

### Reasons NOT to take medications

I want to give lifestyle changes more time to work.  
 True

My life is not suffering because of incontinence symptoms.  
 True

I am concerned about the cost of the medication.  
 True

I am worried about side effects.  
 True

I am worried about the future risk of dementia.  
 True

## Decision

Which option do you prefer? Do you have more checked responses on the left under "Reasons to take medications" or on the right under "Reasons NOT to take medications"? Do you have all the information you need? What else do you need to make your decision?

**Discuss your feelings, preferences and other questions with your doctor.**



# Urinary incontinence

## Patient decision aid

# Should I take medications for urinary incontinence and overactive bladder?

## Gather the facts and compare options

- Urinary incontinence is accidental loss of urine from the bladder.
- There are different types and causes of urinary incontinence.
- Urge incontinence is the involuntary loss of urine before you get to the bathroom. Urge incontinence may be caused by medications or by an overactive bladder muscle that pushes urine out of the bladder.
- Overactive bladder is a group of urinary symptoms that may make you feel the need to urinate (pee) right away. Overactive bladder may or may not cause incontinence.

## Treatment options

### No treatment

Urinary Incontinence or overactive bladder do not need to be treated if the symptoms do not bother you.

### Lifestyle and behavior changes

Lifestyle and behavior changes have the best long-term results to improve incontinence. These are things you can try.

- **Bladder diary.** Write down what and how much you drink and urinate.
- **Bladder training.** Urinate at regular or scheduled times. Gradually increase the time between urination.
- **Pelvic floor muscle training.** See Kegel exercises handout.
- **Fluid management.** Drink the right amount of liquids at the right time. Avoid alcohol and limit caffeinated drinks to 2 cups per day.
- **Diet and weight management.** Keep an ideal weight to lower pressure on your bladder and pelvic floor. Ask your healthcare team what your ideal weight should be.
- **Regular bowel movements.** Constipation can increase how often you need to urinate.
- **Quit smoking.**
- **Use pads to absorb leaky urine.**

### Medications

To be effective, medications for overactive bladder and incontinence need to be used with lifestyle and behavioral changes.



## Compare your options

### Take medications

#### What is involved?

- Make lifestyle changes
- Take medication as prescribed

#### What are the benefits?

- You may have improvement in symptoms right away.

#### What are the risks and side effects of medications?

- May not work for everybody
- May have side effects of dry mouth, dry eyes, headache, fatigue, confusion, stomach pain and constipation
- The medication Myrbetriq (Mirabegron®) may cause high blood pressure and increased heart rate.
- May cause dementia in the future, even after stopping the medication. This increased risk for dementia can last for up to 20 years after stopping.

#### Medications should not be taken if:

- You cannot empty your bladder (urinary retention).
- You have delayed or slow emptying of your stomach (gastric retention).
- You have an eye problem called uncontrolled narrow-angle glaucoma.

#### What is the cost?

- Cost of medication ranges from \$20 to more than \$450 per month.

### Do not take medications

- Make lifestyle changes
- Need to be motivated and make the changes

- You may have long-term improvement and possible cure of symptoms.

- No risks or side effects
- Wearing pads may be embarrassing.

- No cost to many lifestyle changes
- Cost of incontinence pads and underwear ranges from \$20 to \$100 per month