

Nocturia

Nocturia refers to being woken at night by the need to pass urine. This is uncommon under the age of 60 but after that age it becomes more usual: a normal pattern would be once a night in your sixties, twice a night in your seventies and three times in your eighties.

There are numerous reasons why bothersome nocturia can become a problem.

An enlarged prostate gland obstructing the bladder outlet can cause nocturia amongst other water-works symptoms

Excessive fluid intake before retiring: Cut down on any drinks in the last two hours before you go to bed - especially cut out any alcohol, coffee or tea as these stimulate urine production.

Redistribution of body fluid: The symptoms of this are ankles, legs, thighs and fingers swollen with excess fluid. At night, when you lie down, the fluid is reabsorbed into the blood stream and the kidneys then offset this dilution of the blood by producing more urine. Try cutting down your salt intake to see if this helps. Put your feet up when you have the chance during the day. If these methods do not work, consult your doctor so that he can rule out any more serious problem. He may suggest a diuretic pill, to stimulate urine production during the day, but it is not a good idea to take these for any long period of time.

Failure of the kidney to concentrate urine at night: An adult will usually produce in excess of two-thirds of total daily urine in the day and only a small fraction at night, when the kidneys concentrate it so as to produce less volume. The result is that the first urine you pass in the morning will likely be darker than that passed during the day. With age, the kidneys are less able to concentrate urine overnight leading to an increase in the volume of urine produced at night and hence the need to get up to pass urine. In severe cases where an unacceptably large proportion of the daily urine production is at night, medical therapy can be used to reinstitute greater night time concentration of urine, hence improving nocturia.