

Overactive Bladder: Tropsium

Having an overactive bladder is associated with a sudden urge to urinate. You may also experience involuntary loss of urine (incontinence). You may urinate frequently—more than 8 times in 24 hours—and you may awaken more than twice every night to urinate. It is common to feel embarrassed by having an overactive bladder and it may put limits on your ability to work and be involved in social activities. If these symptoms sound familiar, you are not alone. One out of every 6 adults in the United States has this condition and it is even more common as you get older, affecting 2 out of every 10 people over 70 years of age. The good news is that there are medications that may help your symptoms so you can have a better quality of life.

Since overactive bladder symptoms are caused by increased contraction of the muscles in the bladder, medications that relax these muscles are used as treatments. Five different drugs have been approved in the United States to treat overactive bladder. None of these drugs



is proven to be more effective than the others, so the choice of an individual drug is usually based upon its price or tolerability. The oldest and least expensive drug, oxybutynin, is usually tried first, and it is the gold standard to which the others are compared. It is available in several forms: immediate release, long-acting, or a patch that is applied to the skin. In clinical studies, the patch containing active drug had no more side effects than did a patch containing no active ingredients. In general, the long-acting formulations tend to have fewer side effects than the immediate-release formulations. Common side effects of medications that treat overactive bladder include dry eyes and mouth, constipation, changes in memory, disrupted sleep, hallucinations, confusion, delirium, and blurred vision.

DRUGS FOR TREATMENT OF OVERACTIVE BLADDER

Darifenacin (Enablex)
Oxybutynin (Ditropan, Ditropan XL, Oxytrol transdermal patch)
Solifenacin (Vesicare)
Tolterodine (Detrol, Detrol XL)
Tropsium (Sanctura, Sanctura XR)

Based on “Tropsium Chloride Treatment of Overactive Bladder” by Kelly Biastre and Thomas Burnakis, *The Annals of Pharmacotherapy*, February 2009, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1345/aph.1L160>. For Our Patients is provided by *The Annals* to help explain the latest research and information relating to your medications. These summaries are for informational purposes only and are not a substitute for professional advice from your personal medical provider. If you have questions about this material, you should discuss it with your physician or pharmacist. This summary may be reproduced without permission for not-for-profit educational purposes only. Any other use must be approved by the publisher. © Copyright 2009, Harvey Whitney Books Company, www.hwbooks.com.
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Another medication option is tiroprium. Although not proven in any studies, there are 3 properties of tiroprium that suggest it may have benefits over the other medications. First, the drug does not readily enter the brain. This suggests that it might cause less sleepiness, dizziness, and confusion compared with the other medicines. Second, because of the way it is eliminated from the body, tiroprium is not likely to have serious interactions with other drugs. Finally, since the drug is eliminated in the urine, without being metabolized, high concentrations of the active drug reach the bladder to help it relax (individuals with kidney disease therefore need a lower dose).

There is no doubt that these medications can help reduce symptoms associated with overactive bladder. In clinical studies, benefits have been seen in as little as 1 week of therapy. After 3 months, patients report less urinary frequency and urgency and fewer incontinent episodes, and they report that they are able to hold larger amounts of urine in their bladder before they need to urinate.

If you have overactive bladder symptoms, talk to your doctor about the medications that are available. Drug treatments can help many people manage symptoms associated with having an overactive bladder, but the drugs may not be appropriate for individuals who retain urine (including men with benign prostatic hypertrophy), or individuals who have certain gastrointestinal problems or narrow-angle glaucoma.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Consumers Union

www.consumerreports.org/health/resources/pdf/best-buy-drugs/Overactive_Bladder-FINAL.pdf

Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.com/print/overactive-bladder/DS00827/DSECTION=all&METHOD=print