

Dr. Adekoya: Better medications available for overactive bladders

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ALTON - Celebrities today are owning up to having some level of bladder control issues. Katy Perry, Kate Winslet, Tony Romo and Kris Kardashian are among the

celebrities admitting to having mild to more serious forms of incontinence, a problem of accidental loss of urine ranging from small leaks to complete loss of control.

Incontinence is far more common than you might think. One in 10 Americans, including one in three women, will experience symptoms at some point in their lives. Women who give birth sometimes suffer nerve damage or stress on the bladder tissue causing incontinence. Menopausal women also report problems because decreasing estrogen levels can weaken pelvic floor muscles controlling the bladder and urethra (opening in the bladder), causing leakage.

Urgency combined with increased frequency of urination equals a constellation of symptoms called Overactive Bladder. Dr. Emi Adekoya, a Urologist with OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony's Health Center in Alton, Illinois says the condition is very treatable and people don't have to suffer.

He encourages anyone experiencing incontinence on any level, to see their primary care doctor and be referred to a urologist to explore options. He says some solutions are easier than you might expect.

"A lot of people don't want to go to the extreme of surgery and that's understandable but there are minimally invasive things, oral medications and injections we can try out before we have to commit you to surgery," said Dr. Adekoya.

Sometimes simply eliminating certain liquids that can irritate the bladder such as coffee or carbonated beverages and practicing better bathroom habits can stop the problem. Dr. Adekoya finds some patients simply wait too long to find a bathroom and this repeated practice stretches out the bladder. Over time, the brain can miss triggers that you have to go.

Newer Class of Incontinence Drugs are Better

Newer medications have also come on the market, including [Mybetriq](#). The drug is covered by 88 percent of Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage Plans according to GoodRX. Dr. Adekoya often prescribes Mybetriq which relaxes the bladder muscle during filling, helping its ability to store urine. He says it's among a newer class of drugs that are much better, particularly for patients who had experienced falls because their incontinence medications made them groggy.

"I want medications that have good effects locally on the bladder but also do not have the side-effects of diminishing their brain function which is kind of the big thing that happened with the older medications that used to have side-effects on the brain which made them respond slower."

[Botox](#) injections can also be used to treat severe bladder symptoms, such as severe urgency, inability to delay urination, and urinary sphincter spasm. And, there are medical devices that can be implanted through a minimally invasive procedure to stimulate nerves that control your bladder to help it function normally again.

“You won’t end up dancing from this stimulation but it basically creates that sensation to distract your bladder from the urge to go pee.”

Something as simple as an untreated urinary tract infection can also cause incontinence which was the case for Katy Perry when she was a teen and found herself having to wear adult diapers. According to several media reports in which Perry talked publicly about her condition, she explained once she sought medical help and received proper treatment for the underlying cause, her bladder control problems cleared up.

[Talk to your doctor](#) about the bladder control symptoms you are having. The solution can be as simple as a change in diet and behavior modification or your condition could require the expertise of a urologist but as Dr. Adekoya stresses, “You don’t have to suffer in silence.”