

## What is Overactive Neurogenic Lower Urinary Tract Dysfunction (NLUTD)?

Disease or injury in the nervous system can cause NLUTD, including Overactive NLUTD. In Overactive NLUTD, nerves send frequent signals to the bladder, resulting in bladder spasms and/or a feeling of bladder fullness when the bladder is only partially full. For those who have bladder sensation, these spasms typically result in a sudden “gotta-go” feeling, which may occur frequently, and may even result in incontinence. Those without bladder sensation may not realize they are having bladder spasms but may experience some of the symptoms listed below.

### What are the symptoms of Overactive NLUTD?

- **Urgency:** A strong, sudden need to urinate right away.
- **Frequency:** The need to urinate even if you have emptied your bladder recently.
- **Nocturia:** The need to urinate one or more times during the night.
- **Incontinence:** Experiencing leakage of urine between bathroom visits.



Please see our fact sheet “NLUTD Symptoms” for more in-depth information.

### How can Overactive NLUTD affect my life?

Overactive NLUTD can make it hard for you to live life the way that you want. You may not want to go out with friends or go far from home because you’re afraid of not being able to get to a bathroom. Overactive NLUTD can also disrupt your sleep and sex life. If you have mobility challenges, getting to the bathroom in time may be difficult. Urine leakage can also lead to skin rashes and sores.

## However, there are many effective ways to take back control of your life.

### How can I manage Overactive NLUTD and get back to living my life?

Your medical provider or Urologist can help you identify treatment approaches that fit your lifestyle and needs. It may take some trial and error to find the right solution. Here are some of the options:

- Lifestyle changes, including both limiting foods/drinks that can irritate the bladder and going to the bathroom at scheduled times
- Reducing supplements or medications that can lead to more frequent urination
- Use of medications to ease the bladder spasms
- BOTOX® injections to relax the bladder muscles
- Emptying your bladder with a urinary catheter
- Types of catheterization include either:
  - “In and out”, which is intermittent use of a catheter
  - Indwelling, or a catheter that is always present that empties the bladder into a collection bag
- In cases where conservative measures have failed, available surgical treatments include bladder augmentation (a procedure in which a portion of bowel is used to increase the size and capacity of the bladder) or urinary diversion (a procedure in which a stoma, or hole, is made in the lower abdomen to allow for easier catheterization).

Please see our fact sheet “Managing NLUTD” for more in-depth information.

Visit [MedStarResearch.org/BladderRehab](https://www.MedStarResearch.org/BladderRehab)  
to learn more.

