



**It's not easy being middle-aged male**

Nocturnal enuresis, urinary frequency and weak urinary flow often trouble many middle aged males. You may feel embarrassed and find it difficult to talk about the matter, or you may think this is a natural aging process which does not need to be addressed when, in fact, it may be an indication of illness and failure to treat may result in damaging your health!



the frequent urge to urinate. The elderly, unlike the younger generation, do not secrete sufficient antidiuretic hormone, ADH, thus causing nocturnal enuresis to increase. This is one of the many reasons why people suffer insomnia after middle age as nocturnal enuresis is almost impossible to avoid!

**What else should patients with benign enlarged prostates pay attention to?**

1. As patients with enlarged prostates often suffer long term pressure on their urinary tracts and harming the function of their bladder sphincter, thus, it is recommended that they do not hold their urinary urge or risk experiencing difficulty with urination. Urination should be natural and not overly anxious.
2. There is no need to restrict liquid intake during the day but should not drink excessively before bedtime to prevent nocturnal enuresis. Caffeine and alcohol should be avoided before bedtime.
3. Some para-sympathetic and anticholinergic medicine may induce excessive contraction of the bladder sphincter as well as urinary retention and should be taken with caution.

The above signs and symptoms are mostly due to Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH), although benign in nature and not detrimental but can grossly affect the lives of those suffering from this.

**How to tell if you have BPH**

As the urethra is compressed by extrusion from the prostate, causing difficulty in the urinary flow, making you feel the urge and inability to completely empty your bladder. This can also weaken the urinary flow and cause nocturnal enuresis and urinary frequency. As well, it can cause difficulty in passing urine, intermittent flow and droplets nearing the end.

If you have any of these signs of Prostatism, you may be suffering from BPH and if left unattended can lead to urinary tract infection and can eventually become urinary retention.

**What causes BPH?**

As the volume of the prostate enlarges with time, the excessive growth of the prostate tissue pressurizing the urethra can bring on many symptoms for some people.

Males over 50 years of age, approximately 20-30% will experience some level of enlarged prostate and upon reaching 75 years of age, this ratio will increase to 50%. Of course, females do not have prostates and need not worry about this problem.

**How to tell if the enlarged prostate is benign?**

Most enlarged prostates are benign but signs and symptoms alone are insufficient to differentiate whether it is benign or malignant. Doctors will make appropriate assessments for each individual patient which can include the following:

**1. (Digital (Finger) Rectal Examination)**

The doctor will use his finger to examine the prostate

through the anus and according to acquired experience will be able to assess whether the prostate's volume has suspicious lumps.

2. **(Ultrasound examination) (Transrectal Ultrasound (TRUS))** This can render a more accurate assessment of BPH. The effect will be even better using Transrectal Ultrasound. Ultrasound can assess the volume of urine retention in the bladder after passing urine and confirm whether the patient has completely emptied the bladder.
3. **(Urinalysis)** This can diagnose urinary tract infection or haematuria.
4. **(Prostate-specific Antigen (PSA))** This has a definite reference value for assessing prostate cancer. The PSA level is normally as low as 4, if it is between 4 and 10, it is considered borderline. For those with levels higher than 10 or whose levels have rapidly risen in the last few years, there is risk of prostate cancer and further examination is warranted.
5. **Prostate Biopsy:** For suspicious cases, the doctor will consider performing a prostate biopsy. (Uroflowmetry) (Pressure-flow Studies) As well, in order to confirm the effects of enlarged prostate, the doctor may arrange the patient to undergo uroflowmetry or pressure-flow studies.

**What kinds of medication can treat benign enlarged prostate?**

Medication can greatly alleviate the symptoms of enlarged prostate and if the patient is suffering from medium to high levels of BPH which registers higher than 7 on the IPSS (see diagram), he can consider medication including the common ones as follows:

1. **Alpha-adrenergic Blocker** Terazosin (Hytrin®) Doxazosin (Cardura®) Alfuzosin (Xatral®) Tamsulosin (Flomax®) Prazosin (Minipress®)  
These can effectively alleviate the pressure of the sphincter and the bladder and can also assist in enhancing the weak urinary flow. The majority of this type of medicine

can lower blood pressure and is especially suited to those suffering from enlarged prostate as well as high blood pressure however, some will experience dizzy spells. Commonly used Alpha-adrenergic Blockers include: Terazosin (Hytrin®), Doxazosin (Cardura®), Alfuzosin (Xatral®), Tamsulosin (Flomax®), Prazosin (Minipress®), etc.

**2. 5-alpha Reductase Inhibitor Finasteride (Proscar®)**

These can slow down the process of enlarged prostate and may even be able to minimize the volume of the prostate as well as treat male baldness but this type of medication is not as effective as the Alpha-adrenergic blockers in treating weak urinary flow. Finasteride (Proscar®) is one of the commonly used agents.

**3. (Health Supplements) (Saw Palmetto)**

Saw Palmetto is alleged to be effective in the function of the symptoms of enlarged prostate.

**Is surgery required?**

(Transurethral Resection of the Prostate (TURP)) Surgery may be considered for those not responsive to medication. Currently, it is common practice to use Transurethral Resection of the Prostate (TURP) since it is relatively low risk with high recovery rate but there is a minor chance, the patient will suffer urinary incontinence or erectile dysfunction post surgery.

**Why some people continue to suffer from frequent urination and nocturnal enuresis after treatment?**

((Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms, LUTS)) ADH There are many causes to urination discomfort (commonly known as Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms, LUTS)) and enlarged prostate is one of them. As we age, the bladder function deteriorates making it difficult to hold large volumes of urine generating

