Fibromyalgia and Bladder Problems

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Dealing With Fibromyalgia and Bladder Problems

Fibromyalgia has so many different symptoms and problems that can arise, one of which is bladder problems. Bladder incontinence and urinary frequency can really put a damper on your social life, but luckily there are some interventions that can help you live a more fulfilling life.

There are some common urinary issues that tend to affect people with fibromyalgia. It may bring on any or all of these types of urinary issues:

Urinary Frequency

- Feeling the constant urge to urinate
- It is difficult to “hold it"
- You visit the bathroom to urinate more than once during the night
- You may feel pain on urination or pelvic discomfort

Urinary Urgency

- Suddenly needing to urinate
- The urgency brings on discomfort in the pelvis
- You feel like you are going to urinate before getting to the bathroom

Urinary Incontinence

There are a few different kinds of incontinence. They are:

- **Stress incontinence –** When there is pressure to the lower abdomen that causes urine to leak out. This can be from coughing, laughing or exercising.
- **Urge incontinence –** This is when the urge to urinate happens only seconds before urinating.
- **Overflow incontinence –** Urine drips constantly from a bladder that is overfilled.
- **Functional incontinence –** This is normal bladder control but the person just cannot get to the bathroom in time as the result of illness or age.

Dysuria

Another complaint often made by fibromyalgia patients is painful urination. This is called dysuria and it is characterized by a burning sensation while urinating. It may be accompanied by abdominal or bladder discomfort.

Treatment

You do not have to live with urinary incontinence or other urinary problems. Talk to your doctor about your symptoms so you can receive any medical treatment necessary. Most of the symptoms mentioned can be signs of urinary tract infection, so that should be ruled out first. Effective treatments for urinary issues include:

- Physical therapy for your pelvic floor muscles
- Kegel exercises, which train the pelvic floor muscles to become stronger
- Regular physical activity to strengthen bladder muscles
- Some medications can reduce muscle spasms of the bladder that contribute to urinary incontinence, including antidepressants
- If the other interventions are not helpful, the doctor may use electrical stimulation, which uses mild electrical pulses to help tone and strengthen the bladder
- Surgery can be helpful to delay urination and provide better support for the bladder to prevent incontinence