Getting a Good Night’s Sleep With Overactive Bladder

by ERIC PATTERSON

What Is the Best Sleeping Position for OAB?

Overactive bladder (OAB) has the ability to cause a variety of stress and worry during the daytime, but few people consider the serious consequences of OAB during the night. What people without the condition may not realize is that symptoms do not magically disappear when the sun goes down, which is why we are going to talk about the best sleeping position for OAB.

Unfortunately, OAB symptoms persist throughout the night, which leads to poor quality of sleep, poor quantity of sleep, and increased worry and tension when bedtime draws near. Even though nighttime is meant to be a period of calm and relaxation, for those with OAB, this time of day carries ongoing frustrations.

Though you may not have the power to make OAB symptoms go away completely, there are steps a person can take to improve their nighttime OAB symptoms, improve sleep, and wake up feeling rested and recovered.

Taking Care of Daytime OAB

OAB affects all hours of the day, and even though you may wish it vanished overnight, it does not. Overactive bladder starts in the daytime and extends throughout all hours.

Sometimes the best way to address nighttime OAB symptoms is by starting with daytime OAB. If a person can do well to manage symptoms during the day, there is a better chance that they can regulate their symptoms at night.

Of course, dealing with OAB symptoms during the day is not a simple process, but by taking simple steps a person can reduce the effects and prepare for a restful night’s sleep.

Monitor Fluid Intake

There is not always a direct connection between fluid intake and OAB urges or incontinence, but the association is possible. Check to see when you are drinking, what you are drinking and how much you are drinking. Along the way, notice the impact that your daytime drinking has on your nighttime symptoms.

Schedule Bathroom Trips

Stay ahead of your OAB symptoms by making regular trips to the bathroom throughout the day. Whether you feel the need to use the bathroom or not, head to the facilities at regular intervals. When you keep your bladder empty, you can prevent symptoms from forming or becoming problematic.

Keep Up With Kegels

By now, you have heard time and again how important Kegel exercises are for strengthening your pelvic floor and

keeping your OAB symptoms in check. The truth is that Kegels work, but like other positive coping skills, you have to maintain the practice to see the progress take shape. Push past your frustration and maintain practice to see results.

Relaxation for Daytime and Nighttime OAB Relief

Perhaps the best way to address daytime and nighttime OAB symptoms is through relaxation. Relaxation strategies come in many forms, so there is an appropriate relaxation style for everyone.

There is a strong connection between stress and OAB symptoms, with increased OAB symptoms resulting in higher stress, and higher stress levels resulting in increased OAB symptoms. Relaxation helps to put a person's body and mind at ease to yield a two-layer benefit.

Deep Breathing

By focusing on pulling air in and pushing it out with the diaphragm, a person can slow their respiration rate and pulse. Deep breathing is such a profound and helpful form of relaxation but too many people overlook the practice as ineffective. In reality, enough practice will turn the biggest cynics into believers.

Guided Imagery

This practice involves using audio cues to transport you to another time and place. By finding yourself on a moonlit beach, a serene forest, or away from everyone in the middle of the sea, guided imagery produces a relaxed mindset.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) focuses on tensing and relaxing groups of muscles in a systematic way to increase mindfulness and produce feelings of calm. Better yet, Kegel exercises can be incorporated into PMR for an added benefit.

Best Sleeping Position for Overactive Bladder

With your mental planning and physical preparation, you are now prepared to go to sleep. Heading to the bathroom once (or twice) before bedtime will be essential, but your choice of sleeping position could make a big difference as well.

Pillow Between Legs

Although there does not seem to be one overwhelmingly strong sleeping position for people with OAB, sleeping on your left side could have a positive impact, as it may help relieve some of the pressure on your bladder. To increase the benefit, try wedging a pillow between your knees.

Sleep on Your Right Side

Other people may have better success being more inclined or sleeping on their right side, so do not be too disappointed if the left side does not work for you. It only means you need to keep trying.

As with any change, it is best to engage in some level of experimentation to find the best option for you. When experimenting, try to stay in each position for 10 nights straight, then move on to the next for another 10 nights to compare and contrast each strategy.

OAB may not go away completely but taking steps to manage your daytime and nighttime symptoms is a great opportunity. Face the challenge head on.