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## Urinary incontinence and its homoeopathic management

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### Abstract

Urinary incontinence is a condition where there is loss of bladder control and becomes an awkward situation for many. Few patients can have mild symptoms like dribbling of urine on coughing or sneezing and some might have severe symptoms where they cannot control urination and has to pass urine as soon as they get an urge. The prevalence of urinary incontinence is more with increase in age, 5.6% in 30's and 39% in 70's, in women, 3% to 5% in young men and increasing to 11% to 34% in elderly men. This article deals about Homeopathic management of urinary incontinence, different remedies, their indicated symptoms and also various rubrics of urinary incontinence.

**Keywords:** Homoeopathy, holistic approach, urinary incontinence, therapeutics, rubrics

### Introduction

Urinary incontinence is defined as any involuntary leakage of urine. Urinary incontinence occurs in both sexes, but more common in women. Incontinence in men is often a result of prostatic enlargement, or damage to urinary system during surgery or radiotherapy for prostate cancer<sup>[12]</sup>.

**Causes**<sup>[10]</sup>: of urinary incontinence can be divided into – as those which cause temporary and persistent urinary incontinence.

Causes for temporary urinary incontinence <sup>[10]</sup>	Causes for persistent urinary incontinence <sup>[10]</sup>
Certain food, drinks and medication may act as diuretics, which includes caffeine, alcohol, artificial sweeteners, carbonated drinks and sparkling water, chocolates, acidic food, spicy food, and citrus fruits. Medical conditions like UTI and constipation may also cause temporary urinary incontinence <sup>10</sup>	Pregnancy and child birth, hysterectomy, Menopause, Prostatic enlargement, Cancer of prostate, obstruction along the urinary tract are major causes contribute for persistent incontinence <sup>[10]</sup> . Neurological disorders like Stroke, Parkinson's disease, Multiple sclerosis, Brain tumours and Spinal injury can damage the nerve supply to bladder causing urinary incontinence <sup>[10]</sup> .

**Risk factors**<sup>[10]</sup>: Gender- women more prone than men, Age- older age more effected, over weight, smoking, Family history, Neurological disorders, Diabetes Mellitus are some important risk factors.

**Patho-physiology**<sup>[4]</sup>: The sphincter tone is gradually increased, as urine accumulates in the bladder during storage phase, but there is no significant changes in bladder pressure, detrusor pressure, or intra-abdominal pressure. During voiding, intra-vesical pressure increases as a result of detrusor contraction and the sphincter relaxes allowing urine to flow from bladder until it is empty. Clinical disorders associated with incontinence are connected with various abnormalities in this cycle<sup>[4]</sup>.

### Types of urinary incontinence

**Stress urinary incontinence** is a type in which there is involuntary leakage of urine which occurs when there is increase in intra-abdominal pressure (e.g., with exertion, effort, coughing or sneezing,) due to weakness of either pelvic floor or urethral sphincter<sup>[11]</sup>. This type of incontinence may also be experienced by young women who are active in sports.

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In addition, pregnant women and women after childbirth/delivery may also prone to develop stress urinary incontinence. This type is rare in men but may be observed following surgery to prostate [4].

Urge urinary incontinence is the involuntary leakage of urine which may be preceded or accompanied by a sense of urgency of urine due to detrusor over activity, which increases bladder pressure that overcomes the urethral sphincter [11]. The contractions may be caused by bladder irritation due to bladder stone, infections or loss of neurologic control like in Multiple Sclerosis, Spina Bifida [4].

Mixed urinary incontinence is the involuntary urine leakage caused by a combination of both, above described stress and urge urinary incontinence.

**Continual incontinence:** Is suggestive of fistula, between bladder and vagina or ureter and vagina. It is common observed after Gynecological surgery, Gynecological malignancy, prolonged obstructed labour and post radiotherapy. In children continual incontinence is seen in congenital ectopic ureters [4].

**Overflow urinary incontinence** is the type in which there

is involuntary urine leakage from over-distended bladder due to either impaired detrusor contractility and/or bladder outlet obstruction. It is most commonly attended with BPH. It may also arise in either sex as a result of detrusor muscle failure (atonic bladder). Neurologic diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis, Spinal cord injuries, and Diabetes mellitus can impair detrusor function. Bladder outlet obstruction can be caused by external compression by abdominal or pelvic masses and pelvic organ prolapse, tumour or trauma or from Cauda Equina compression by Disc prolapse, are among other causes. A common cause in men is Benign Hyperplasia of prostate [4].

**Functional urinary incontinence** is the involuntary urinary leakage due to environmental or physical barriers to toileting. This type of incontinence is sometimes referred to as toileting difficulty [11].

**Homoeopathic approach to urinary incontinence**

Many rubrics are available for urinary incontinence. An attempt is made to classify rubrics according to type of incontinence from standard repertoires, Synthesis 9.1, Homeopathic Medical Repertory by Murphy, and Borieke Clinical Repertory.

Stress incontinence	Urge incontinence	Overflow incontinence	Functional incontinence	Bed wetting
-Blowing of nose when -Coryza during -Cough during -Pregnancy during -Delivery after -Eructation on -Exertion during -Flatus expelling when -Labor after -Laughing -Sudden movement from -Prolapse of uterus from -Rising from seat when -Running while -Sneezing when -Stool while, staining at -Vomiting while	-Angry when -Fever during -Chill during -Cold becoming when -Convulsions during -Company in -Dentition during -Dysmenorrhoea during -Hurry when -Menses during -Newly married women in -Sudden noise -Putting hands in cold water -Retain, great pain, on attempting to -Sex after -Surprise –pleasurable agg -Water running from a hydrant- on seeing -Worm complaints with	-Consciousness- without -Constipation with -Distension of bladder from -Inattention from- -Must keep mind on it -Retention with -Tumors brain or spinal with -Locomotor ataxia -Anemia in	-Delayed if -Desire is resisted if -Nervous prostration in	-Urination Involuntary, Children in -Urination Involuntary, Boys in -Urination Involuntary, Adolescence -Bed, in first sleep -Difficult to wake the child -Dreaming of urination while, -Spasmodic enuresis -Urination Involuntary, In weakly children -Elderly people with -Urination Involuntary, Sleep during -Moon full during agg -Moon new during agg -Tangible cause, except habit, where there is no.

Causation and concomitants are given high importance in Homeopathy, here are some important rubrics-

- Involuntary urination- acute diseases after
- Involuntary urination- from blow on head
- Involuntary urination-catheterization after
- Involuntary urination- fright from
- Involuntary urination- fright from, long lasting
- Involuntary urination- injury from
- Involuntary urination- masturbation from
- Involuntary urination- measles after
- Involuntary urination-typhoid fever in
- Involuntary urination- eczema with
- Involuntary urination- headache with

**Remedies given for involuntary urination in first grade from Murphy Repertory are**

AILANTHUS, APIS, Argentum Nitricum, Arsenicum Album, Arsenicum Iodatam, Belladonna, Causticum, Dulcamara, Lycopodium, Natrum Muriaticum, Nux.Moschata, Phoshorus, Psorinum, Pulsatilla, Rhustox, Sepia, And Staphisagria.

**Indications for some important Homeopathic remedies**

Homeopathy is based on holistic approach. Prime importance is given for individual personality, however, therapeutics play an important role when there are minimal symptoms belongs to patient as a whole. The following are therapeutics for some most important remedies for incontinence of urine.

**Causticum**

The most important pathogenesis of drug Causticum is paralysis or paresis of bladder sphincter. Symptoms are involuntary urination during coughing, sneezing, on walking or on blowing nose. Urine is expelled very slowly and retained sometimes. Enuresis during first sleep at night; also from slightest excitement. Useful for urine retention after surgical operations and after labour/delivery. Loss of sensibility during urination; can't tell when urine is passing in the dark, except only by the sense of touch. Bladder Paralysis, from long retention of urine, and consequent incontinence [as in sleep or in schoolgirls]<sup>[9]</sup>.

**Equisetum**

Its principal action is on bladder. Equisetum is to be thought of in weakness of the bladder, with dribbling, in insane people who will not attend to the bladder, and in incontinence of urine in old men. Incontinence in children, & dreams [of crowds of people] or nightmares when passing urine<sup>[9]</sup>. Nocturnal enuresis, without cause except habit. Incontinence in old women. Passed small amount of urine, but felt as if had not urinated for hours<sup>[3]</sup>.

**Kreosotum**

One of the best remedies known for urinary incontinence. Persons are dark complexed, lean, ill-developed, poorly nourished, overgrown, and very tall for her age<sup>1</sup>. Offensive urine. They can urinate only during lying and they cannot get out of bed quickly enough during first sleep. There is enuresis in night during first part of sleep, from which child is roused with difficulty. Must hurry when desire comes to urinate. Urination involuntary, when lying, on coughing. Wets bed at night, wakes with urging, but can't retain urine, or dreams he is urinating in a decent manner<sup>[9]</sup>.

**Lycopodium**

For persons intellectually keen, but physically weak<sup>[1]</sup>. Complaints are from anger, mortification, fright, or vexation with reserved displeasure<sup>[8]</sup>. Boericke Materia Medica says "In nearly all cases where Lycopodium is the remedy, some evidence of urinary or digestive disturbance will be found"<sup>[2]</sup>. Urinary symptoms include involuntary urination especially in fever. Long lasting incontinence of urine resulting from fright during coition<sup>[3]</sup>.

**Nat Mur**

This drug is indicated for persons who are cachectic and anemic; whether from loss of vital fluids; seminal losses, profuse menses, or mental affections. It is also useful for the bad effects: of anger (caused by offence); fright, grief, vexation, mortification or reserved displeasure<sup>[1]</sup>. Involuntary urination when coughing; sneezing, laughing, walking, sitting. They have to wait for quite a long time for urine to pass if others are present. There is slowing down of the action of the bladder<sup>[6]</sup>. They can't retain urine as they have frequent or sudden desire to urinate, with copious flow<sup>[3]</sup>.

**Phosphorus**

This drug is indicated for tall slender persons of sanguine temperament, delicate eyelashes, fair skin, fine blond, or red hair, quick perceptions, and are very sensitive nature<sup>[1]</sup>. Very useful remedy for urge incontinence and overflow incontinence. Sudden urge to urinate without pain when it is

passing. Urine is acrid and smells offensive. Involuntary urination in children who grow too rapidly. Incontinence of urine in aged persons from paralysis of sphincter. Full bladder, but causing no trouble or desire to urinate; unable to pass urine or incontinence, both from paralysis of bladder<sup>[9]</sup>.

**Psorinum**

When the selected remedies fail to improve or relieve in chronic cases this drug is found useful<sup>[1]</sup>. Ailments are from even slight emotions, suppression of itch or in other skin diseases, when Sulphur remedy fails to relieve<sup>[1]</sup>. Has to pass urine several times; from weakness of bladder. Enuresis is from bladder paresis; which has aggravation at full moon, also for obstinate cases, with a family history of eczema. Urine is thick, turbid, whitish or red deposit, with formation of cuticle on surface of urine. There is escape of urine during coughing<sup>[9]</sup>.

**Pulsatilla**

This drug is adapted to persons who are slow, indecisive, of phlegmatic temperament; with pale face, blue eyes, sandy hair, and are easily moved to laughter or tears. They are mild, gentle, affectionate, timid and yielding disposition<sup>1</sup>. This is useful for all types of urinary incontinence. Urinary symptoms include 'as if urine is impossible for them to delay'; they can scarcely wait for urine when they have urinate sensation, they feel as if it would gush away. Involuntary micturition at night, on laughing, coughing or passing flatus; sneezing, after pleasurable surprise, shock, on hearing sudden noise; during sleep, esp. in little girls. They have dribbling of urine with anger, when sitting or walking. Nocturnal enuresis seen after measles; and in autumn; especially in little girls<sup>[3]</sup>.

**Sepia**

Adapted to persons of dark hair, rigid fibre, but mild and easy disposition<sup>[1]</sup>. Very useful for bed wetting, stress and urge incontinence. Its symptoms include involuntary urination, during first sleep; child passes urine as soon as he goes to sleep. Involuntary urination, agg. coughing, sneezing, laughing; hearing sudden noise, fright or inattention, esp. in women. Enuresis nocturna: in boys of light complexion; in onanists. Involuntary urination if desire is not immediately complied with. Urine: deposits a reddish clay-colored sediment which adheres to the vessel as if it had been burned on; fetid, so offensive must be removed from the room is most important symptom for differentiation<sup>[9]</sup>.

**Staphysagria**

Staphysagria persons are very mild, sweet, gentle persons. They are sensitive to rudeness and cannot fight her own rights. Complaints are from indignation, mortification, envy, chagrin, pride, unmerited insults, vexation or reserved displeasure and for the bad effects sexual excesses, onanism and loss of vital fluids<sup>[1]</sup>. This remedy is useful for stress and urge incontinence. Incontinence from infection, Honeymoon cystitis. Involuntary and copious micturition, esp. on coughing. Involuntary discharge of urine, acrid and corroding, agg. motion. Ailments after catheter, lithotomy<sup>[9]</sup>.

**Conclusion**

Urinary incontinence is a psychological problem, which causes lot of embarrassment and restrict people from social life and it may subsequently lead to depression. The scope of treatment for this condition in modern medicine is mostly limited to surgery. Homeopathy offers best treatment for urinary incontinence through safe medication without side effects. This system of medicine improves quality of life of patient, through individualized constitutional treatment.

**Abbreviations:** BPH: Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy UTI- urinary tract infection, agg- aggravation, amel- amelioration.

**Conflict of Interest**

Not available

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