

BOWEL FUNCTION	BLADDER FUNCTION	SLEEP
<p>CONSTIPATION: THE MOST COMMON BOWEL ISSUE</p> <p>Symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stool that is hard, dry <p>Possible causes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate fiber/fluids • Reduced mobility • Weakened abdominal muscles • Depression • Certain medications (e.g, antidepressants, diuretics, calcium supplements) <p>Behavioral Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get bladder issues under control first • Drink lots of fluids • Increase fiber intake • Move more • Aim for a regular time: 30 min. after a meal <p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulk-forming supplements • Avoid prolonged use of laxatives 	<p>OVERACTIVE BLADDER</p> <p>Symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgency • Frequency • Urination at night • Leakage/incontinence <p>Behavioral interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink fluids • Limit caffeine/alcohol • Urinate every 2 hours • Do Kegel exercises • Restrict fluids: after dinner and 2 hours before activities without bathrooms <p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral medication • Botox injections • Pelvic Floor PT 	<p>DISRUPTED OR INSUFFICIENT SLEEP</p> <p>Symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, waking too early <p>Possible causes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress/Worry • Bladder issues • Pain and spasticity • Restless legs • Sleep apnea • Prolonged naps during the day <p>Behavioral Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent night routine • No screen time in bed • Use your bed only for sleep and sex • Use relaxation techniques to help • If you don't fall asleep in about 15 minutes, go to another room and do a quiet activity until you feel sleepy <p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive behavior therapy is effective for insomnia (CBT-I)
<p>DIARRHEA</p> <p>Possible causes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impaction of stool caused by constipation can block the colon; liquid stool can then leak around the impaction • Overactive bowel <p>Behavioral Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective management of constipation <p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication for overactive bowel 	<p>UNDERACTIVE BLADDER</p> <p>Symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgency • Dribbling • Hesitancy • Incontinence <p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermittent self- catheterization <p>Behavioral Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit citrus juices • Take cranberry tablets or juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sleep study can help identify if you have a sleep disorder like sleep apnea, circadian shift, or narcolepsy

TIPS

These symptoms can have a significant impact on your quality of life – so advocate for your care and comfort! Use our Conversation Starters to help you talk with healthcare providers & other important people in your life about these issues.

Women may not be sure whether these problems are related to age, pregnancy, menopause. or MS. Regardless of the cause, you can get help to feel and function better.