

## BURDEN AND TREATMENT OF BLADDER SYMPTOMS IN US ADULTS

### Hypothesis / aims of study

Overactive bladder (OAB) is defined as urinary urgency, with or without urgency urinary incontinence, usually with frequency and nocturia [1]. This study measured the burden of bothersome bladder symptoms and the use of prescription medications for these OAB symptoms in a national sample of US adults.

### Study design, materials and methods

The sampling frame was constructed from an existing consumer panel of 600,000 US households constructed to match the US census. A 2-stage sampling scheme was used to create a target subsample (n=260,000) of individuals representative of US adults for age, sex, geographic area, household size, and urban versus rural location. The survey used the Overactive Bladder-Validated 8 (OAB-V8) instrument to measure the degree of bother due to specific bladder symptoms [2]. Consistent with prior validation studies of this instrument, subjects were considered to have probable OAB if they scored  $\geq 8$ . Additional questions probed patterns of treatment for bladder symptoms. A telephone survey of 1000 individuals who did not return the written survey is ongoing to determine potential differences in characteristics between responders to the mail survey and the nonresponders.

### Results

Of 260,000 surveys sent, 160,985 were returned (62% response rate). Responders were representative of US adults based on a comparison with US census data on age, sex, and geography. Men accounted for 44.8% of the survey sample; 21.8% of subjects were aged  $\geq 65$  years.

Symptom bother scores  $\geq 8$  were reported by 26.6% of the total sample (23.8% of men; 28.9% of women) and increased with age (**Figure 1**). Scores  $\geq 8$  were more common in women than in men  $\leq 65$ ; the trend reversed at older ages.

Of those with symptom bother scores  $\geq 8$ , only 22.6% had ever used a prescription medication for their bladder symptoms, 13.4% had used medication for their symptoms in the past 12 months, and 8.0% were on treatment at the time of the survey. Only 45.8% had discussed their symptoms with a medical provider. Of those with scores  $\geq 8$  who had also discussed their symptoms with a medical provider, 46.5% had ever used a prescription medication for their bladder symptoms, 27.9% had used medication for their symptoms in the past 12 months, and 16.7% were on treatment at the time of the survey. Rates of current treatment with prescription OAB medications are reported by age and sex in **Figure 2**.

### Interpretation of results

A substantial proportion of the US adult population experiences some degree of bother due to bladder symptoms in the domains of nocturia, frequency, urgency, and urgency urinary incontinence. The burden of symptoms is associated with age and sex. A relatively small proportion of patients with symptom scores indicative of probable OAB have received treatment with medication, and even fewer are currently on treatment.

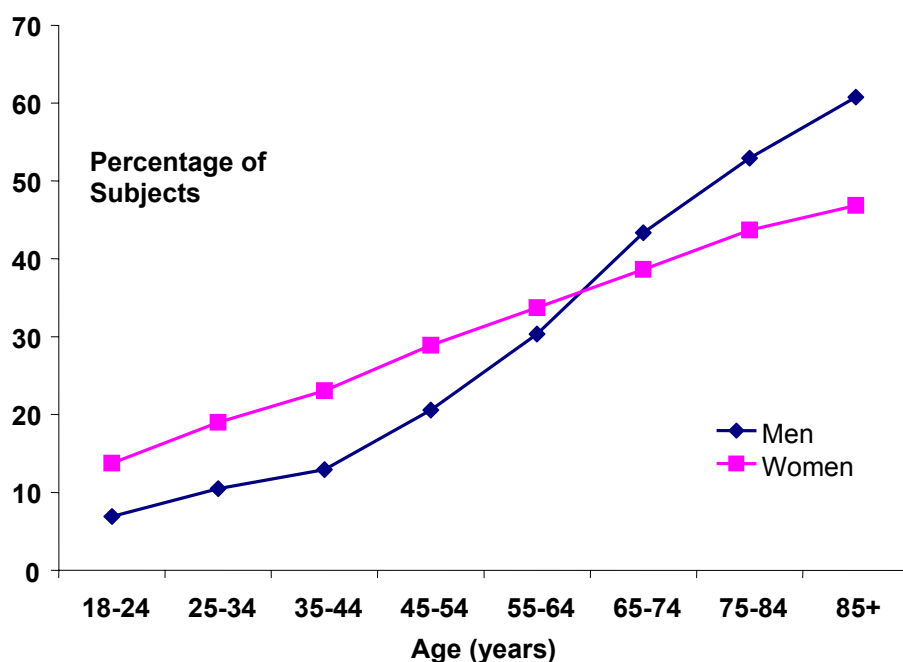
### Concluding message

The burden of bothersome bladder symptoms in the US adult population is substantial, yet only a small proportion of affected individuals receive treatment with prescription medications.

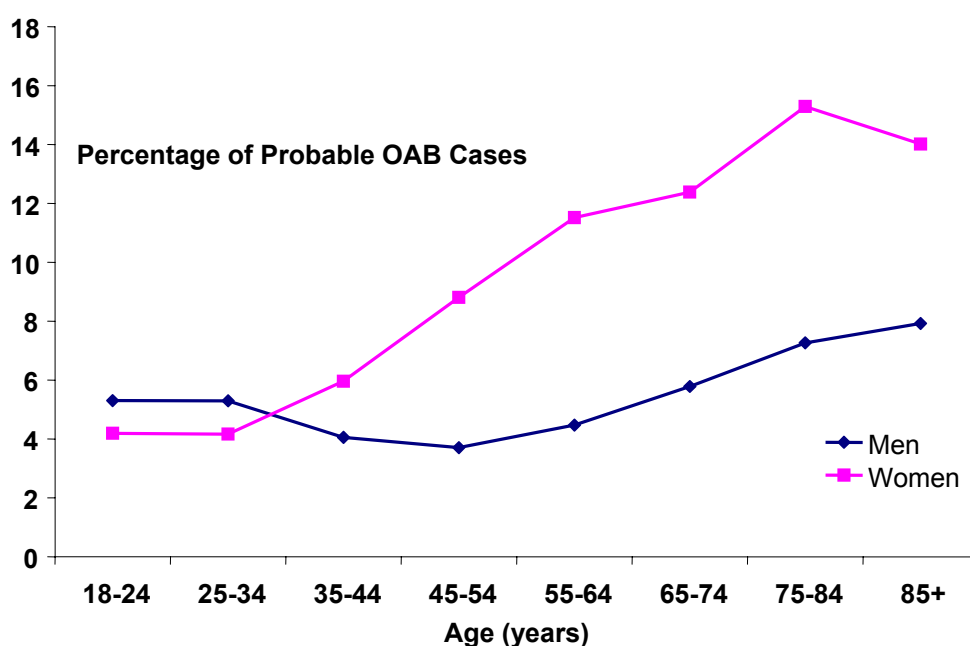
## References

1. The standardisation of terminology in lower urinary tract function: report from the standardisation sub-committee of the International Continence Society. *Urology*. 2003;61:37-49.
2. Validation of an overactive bladder screener in a primary care patient population in the United States. Presented at: 34th Joint Meeting of the International Continence Society and the International Urogynecological Association; August 23–27, 2004; Paris, France.

**Figure 1. Percentage of Subjects with OAB-V8 Score  $\geq 8$**



**Figure 2. Percentage of Probable OAB Sufferers Who Have Taken Prescription Treatment Within the Past 4 Weeks**



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