

What are Symptoms of Neurogenic Lower Urinary Tract Dysfunction (NLUTD)?

NLUTD, also called neurogenic bladder, occurs when bladder control is impaired due to an injury or disease of the nervous system. There are several types of NLUTD, which can occur alone or in combination. Symptoms may vary depending on the type(s) of NLUTD that you have, as well as if you have other bladder condition(s).

Overactive NLUTD is a problem with storing urine in the bladder.

Symptoms include:

- Urgency: a strong, sudden need to urinate right away
- Frequency: the need to urinate even if you have emptied your bladder recently
- Nocturia: the need to urinate one or more times during the night
- Incontinence: urine leakage
- Autonomic Dysreflexia (Spinal Cord Injury only)

See our [Factsheet on Overactive NLUTD](#)

Underactive NLUTD is a problem with emptying urine from the bladder.

Symptoms include:

- Slow urine stream (a “dribble” of urine), or inability to urinate
- Straining to urinate
- Feeling like your bladder is still full even after emptying/using the bathroom
- Using the bathroom frequently, but only being able to release a small amount of urine
- Frequent urinary tract infections (UTIs)

See our [Factsheet on Underactive NLUTD](#)

People who have both **underactive and overactive NLUTD** can experience any combination of the symptoms listed above.

Detrusor sphincter dyssynergia (DSD)

DSD is when the bladder and sphincter (the muscle that controls the ability to release urine from the bladder) do not work together as they are supposed to. This results in incomplete emptying or difficulty emptying the bladder of urine. It is often called a “silent” condition because there is no way to tell it is occurring unless urologic testing is done specifically looking for DSD. DSD can lead to kidney damage, autonomic dysreflexia, or other problems. DSD can only be diagnosed with a test called urodynamics, which usually involves the use of a catheter and pressure monitors to find out more about muscle and nerve function in the lower urinary tract.

What should I do if I have these symptoms?

If you have NLUTD, you should be followed routinely by a urologist. If you experience urinary symptoms, discuss these with your healthcare provider. Remember that DSD is often “silent” and can occur in combination with many of the symptoms listed above, as well as causing other problems (for example autonomic dysreflexia). So if you have NLUTD, ask your health care provider about being tested for DSD.

See our Factsheet on [Managing NLUTD](#) for management options. Also see our Factsheet on [Urinary Tract Infections and NLUTD](#).

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