

Table D.5 Medications that can cause or aggravate urinary incontinence

Medicines	Mechanism	Type of incontinence
Analgesics		
Opioids, e.g. morphine, tramadol	Inhibit voiding reflex, reduce detrusor activity, urinary retention, constipation, confusion	Overflow, functional
Anticholinergic agents¹		
E.g. oxybutynin, propantheline, tolterodine, solifenacin	Reduce detrusor activity, voiding difficulty, urinary retention, constipation	Overflow
Antihypertensives		
Antihypertensives (all)	Postural hypotension (unsteadiness)	Functional
ACE inhibitors	Cough-induced sphincter weakness	Stress
Diuretics	Polyuria, constipation, frequency	Urge
Verapamil	Reduces detrusor activity, constipation	Overflow
Cholinergic agents		
Bethanechol ²	Enhance detrusor activity (instability), urgency	Urge
Psychotropics		
Amisulpride, clozapine, olanzapine, quetiapine, risperidone	Constipation, confusion, sedation, parkinsonism	Overflow, functional, stress
Benzodiazepines	Sedation, impaired mobility	Functional
Chlorpromazine, haloperidol, pericyazine, thioridazine, trifluoperazine	Anticholinergic, sedation, confusion, parkinsonism, impaired mobility	Overflow, functional
Lithium	Polydipsia, nocturia, frequency	Functional
SSRIs (paroxetine has some anticholinergic effects), moclobemide, venlafaxine	Enhance detrusor activity (instability), sedation, impaired mobility	Urge, functional
TCAs ¹ , mianserin, mirtazapine, reboxetine	Anticholinergic, sedation, impaired mobility	Overflow, functional
Selective alpha blockers³		
Prazosin, tamsulosin, terazosin	Sphincter relaxation, unconscious dribbling of urine	Stress
Other		
Donepezil, galantamine, rivastigmine	Cholinergic effect, detrusor instability, frequency, urgency	Urge, overflow
Pseudoephedrine	Enhance sphincter activity, retention, voiding difficulty	Overflow
Tiaprofenic acid	Enhance detrusor activity, frequency, urgency	Urge, cystitis-like symptoms

1. Relax the bladder and increase its capacity; used for urge incontinence. Older people are more sensitive to their adverse effects.
2. Bethanechol increases bladder contraction; used to treat urinary retention and overflow incontinence; has limited efficacy and is not recommended.
3. Block receptors in bladder neck and urethra; may help to reduce outflow obstruction in males; may exacerbate or precipitate incontinence in women.