

# ASK YOUR DOCTOR

## Bathroom Habits May Signal A Potential Medical Condition

(NAPSA)—Americans spend an average of an hour a day in the bathroom—add it up and it's two weeks a year. And, what's going on in the bathroom may surprise you. A recent national survey, sponsored by Pharmacia Corporation, discovered that many respondents fessed up to using the bathroom for reading (53 percent), engaging in deep thought (47 percent), or talking on the phone (33 percent). For many, a frequent urge to answer nature's call often prompts extra visits to the bathroom. In fact, most Americans admit that they immediately locate a bathroom when visiting a new location, especially those with a sudden urge to urinate.

Although this "toilet mapping" behavior is not necessarily uncommon, in some cases, it may signal a potential medical problem called overactive bladder. "Altering daily activities to accommodate immediate access to a bathroom is behavior consistent with the symptoms of overactive bladder—a treatable medical condition in most instances," said Lauri Romanzi, M.D., clinical assistant professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Cornell Weill Medical College, New York, NY.



**Overactive bladder is a problem many mistakenly dismiss as a part of aging, or are too embarrassed to discuss with their doctors, yet the condition is often easy to treat.**

More than 17 million Americans suffer from overactive bladder, which is characterized by urinary frequency, urgency and urge incontinence, the involuntary loss of urine. The condition affects men and women of all ages and

can significantly impact the quality of life for sufferers. And, most people with the condition are under age 65.

Today there are several effective treatments for overactive bladder from behavioral exercises to medications, such as DETROL® LA (tolterodine tartrate extended release capsules). This recently approved, once-daily medication works to prevent erratic contractions of muscles in the bladder that contribute to overactive bladder. Behavioral techniques, such as bladder training, may also help people regain bladder control. Approximately 80 percent of those affected by bladder control problems, like overactive bladder, can be cured or can significantly increase their quality of life by talking to a physician or healthcare professional and getting the right treatment.

"People with overactive bladder often wait too long to seek help," said Dr. Romanzi. "We find that shame and embarrassment are the biggest barriers to treatment and many people continue to suffer in silence."

For information about overactive bladder and Detrol LA, visit [www.overactivebladder.com](http://www.overactivebladder.com).