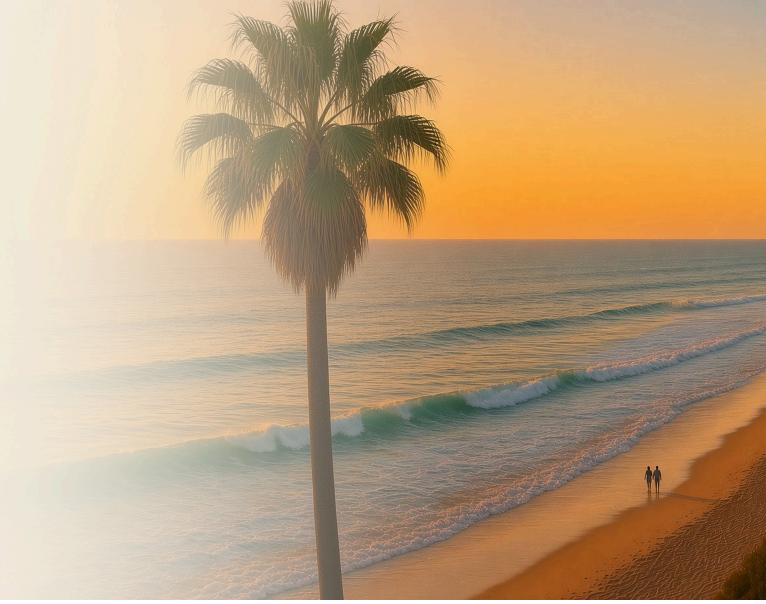
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When Urination Causes Fainting

Fainting before, during or right after urination. Simple habits lower the risk, and every faint deserves a medical evaluation.

40+

men over 40 are the group most commonly affected, though women and children can have it too

Seconds

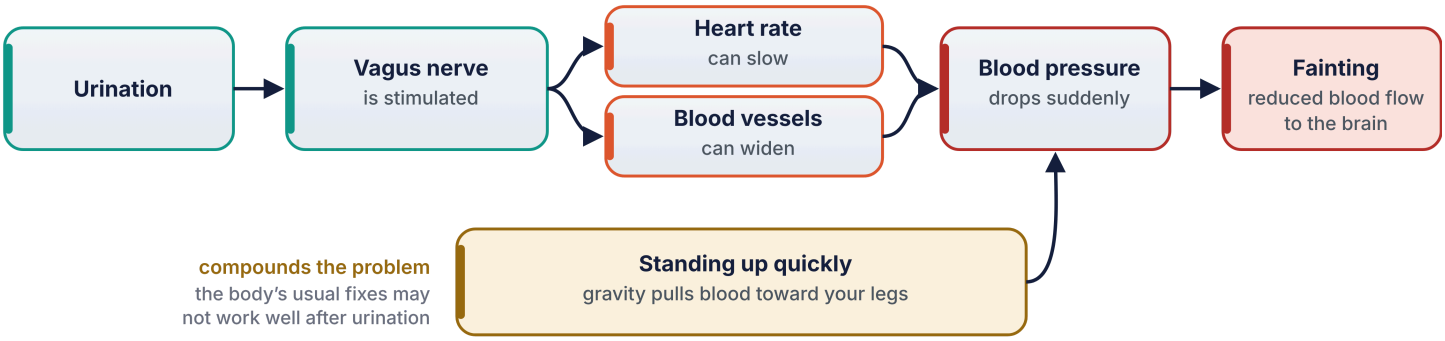
to minutes is how long most fainting episodes last, and people usually recover completely

A few min

sitting on the edge of the bed before you stand up gives your body time to adjust

WHY IT HAPPENS

A reflex that drops your blood pressure



Doctors call this **reflex syncope**. It often occurs in the morning after getting out of bed, when you stand up to urinate after lying down or sitting, when the bladder is very full, or in a warm room. Dehydration, alcohol before bedtime, diabetes, heart disease, neurological disorders and some medicines for blood pressure, depression or an enlarged prostate, especially water pills, can add to the risk.

IF YOU FEEL FAINT

Get down before you fall

1. **Notice the warning signs**
   Lightheadedness or dizziness, nausea, sweating, feeling warm or flushed, or blurred vision. Many people get no warning at all.

2. **Sit or lie down at once**
   This helps prevent a fall and injury. Getting horizontal helps blood flow return to your brain and can prevent a full loss of consciousness.

3. **Recover lying down**
   Recovery is usually complete within minutes. If you don't recover promptly, or you have chest pain, shortness of breath or palpitations, call 911.

Get every faint checked

Micturition syncope is usually not dangerous in itself, but it can cause falls and injuries. Fainting from a heart problem can look just like it, and only a proper medical evaluation can tell the difference.

PREVENTION AND GETTING HELP

Five habits, and when to call your doctor

PREVENTION

Sit down to urinate	The most effective step, especially at night or in the morning. It can help prevent falls if you do faint and reduces the blood pressure changes that come with standing.
Take your time getting up	Sit on the edge of the bed for a few minutes before standing up. This gives your body time to adjust and helps prevent the sudden blood pressure drop.
Don't wait too long	Avoid urinating with a very full bladder, and go regularly, especially if you wake at night. The fuller your bladder, the more likely the reflex that triggers fainting.
Stay hydrated	Drink enough fluids through the day, but avoid large amounts right before bed. Your provider might recommend slightly more fluid and salt to help maintain blood pressure.
Review your medicines	Go over them with your provider, especially blood pressure medicines and water pills. Sometimes adjustments can reduce your risk without compromising treatment for other conditions.

CALL 911 OR GET EMERGENCY CARE

After a faint	A faint with chest pain, shortness of breath, palpitations or an injury, a faint without the warning signs you usually get, or not recovering promptly once lying down.

CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Repeated faints	Repeated episodes of fainting. People with a history of heart disease should be especially vigilant about any faint.

HOW DOCTORS TELL THE DIFFERENCE

Your story	The timing and circumstances of the faint give important clues, and doctors rule out heart and neurological causes.
Heart tests	An electrocardiogram checks heart rhythm, an echocardiogram looks at heart structure, and specialized tests check the heart's electrical conduction.
Blood tests and monitors	Blood tests can reveal underlying conditions that contribute to fainting. Monitoring devices can catch rhythm problems that a brief office visit misses.

DON'T SELF-DIAGNOSE

A harmless bathroom faint feels the same as a faint from a dangerous heart rhythm, and heart rhythm problems can strike during urination too. Every unexplained loss of consciousness needs a medical evaluation, preferably by a cardiologist.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

damianrasch.com/micturition-syncope

For education only, and not a substitute for advice from your own physician. Distilled from Dr. Rasch's article on micturition syncope at damianrasch.com, which does not cite outside studies.

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