

TITLE 1: "Ask the Doctor"

TITLE 2:

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- Symptoms

ABSTRACT OVERVIEW: One readers asks whether urination, menstrual discomfort, or herpes flare ups can be symptoms of RLS.

COPY OF ARTICLE:

Dr. William Ondo from the Department of Neurology at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, answered all of the 'Ask the Doctor' questions in this issue of NightWalkers.

Q. *I am a healthcare professional and have had mild RLS for more than 20 years. I have noticed*



several things that seem to be related to an increase in my RLS symptoms. My RLS is worse when my bladder or bowels are full and premenstrually when my pelvis is "full." If I don't empty my bladder before bed, RLS will strike. Also, I must sit or lie with my knees elevated or I almost immediately have a bout with RLS. The other thing I have associated with RLS is herpes type-II flare-ups. Since the herpes virus resides in neurons when inactive, there seems to me to be a possibility of some relationship. Have you heard of these relationships? Is there a connection between the fullness and RLS symptoms and between herpes infections and RLS symptoms?

A. I have several patients who report that RLS can be related to urination. The most common report is that RLS improves while they are urinating.

Other than that I have not heard any consistent pattern of improvement or worsening with or without a full bladder or bowels. Likewise patients can report improvement, worsening, or no change in relation to their menstrual cycles. Anything that causes injury to the nerve can cause or worsen RLS. However, herpes zoster flares are often set off by some change in the immune system (stress, fatigue etc.) so it is difficult to determine exactly what is causing the RLS worsening.