**TREATING YOUR INFECTION – URINARY TRACT INFECTION (UTI)**

# For women under 65 years with suspected lower urinary tract infections (UTIs) or lower recurrent UTIs (cystitis or urethritis)

**Possible urinary signs & symptoms The outcome Recommended care Types of urinary tract infection**


##  Key signs/symptoms:

**Dysuria:** Burning pain when passing urine (wee) **New nocturia:** Needing to pass urine in the night **Cloudy urine:** Visible cloudy colour when passing urine

##  Other signs/symptoms to consider:

**Frequency:** Passing urine more often than usual **Urgency:** Feeling the need to pass urine immediately **Haematuria:** Blood in your urine

**Suprapubic pain:** Pain in your lower tummy

##  Other things to consider: Recent sexual history

* Inflammation due to sexual activity can feel similar to the symptoms of a UTI
* Some sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can have symptoms similar to those of a UTI

## Changes during menopause

* Some changes during the menopause can have symptoms similar to those of a UTI

## Non-pregnant women:

**If none or only one of: dysuria, new nocturia, cloudy urine; AND/OR vaginal discharge**

* + UTI much less likely
	+ You may need a urine test to check for a UTI
	+ Antibiotics less likely to help
	+ Usually lasts 5 to 7 days

## If 2 or more of: dysuria, new nocturia, cloudy urine; OR bacteria detected

**in urine; AND NO vaginal discharge**

* + UTI more likely; antibiotics should help
	+ You should start to improve within 48 hours
	+ Symptoms usually last 3 days

**Pregnant women:** Always request urine culture

## If suspected UTI

**Self-care and pain relief.**

* Symptoms may get better on their own

**Delayed or backup prescription with self-care and pain relief** Start antibiotics if symptoms:

* Get worse
* Do not get a little better with self-care within 48 hours

**Immediate** antibiotic prescription plus self-care

## If mild symptoms, delayed or back-up antibiotic prescription plus self-care

**Immediate** antibiotic prescription plus self-care

UTIs are caused by bacteria getting into your urethra or bladder, usually from your gut. Infections may occur in different parts of the urinary tract.

## Kidneys (make urine)

Infection in the upper urinary tract

* + Pyelonephritis (pie-lo-nef-right-is). Not covered in this leaflet and always needs antibiotics

## Bladder (stores urine)

Infection in the lower urinary tract

* + Cystitis (sis-tight-is).

## Urethra (takes urine out of the body)

Infection or inflammation in the urethra

* + Urethritis (your-ith-right-is)

# If you think you may have COVID-19 then please visit<http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>or [http://www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk/) for the latest guidance and information

**Self-care to help yourself get better more quickly**

**Options to help prevent a UTI Antibiotic resistance When should you get help?**

Contact your GP practice or contact NHS

* Drink enough fluids to stop you feeling thirsty. Aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses
* Avoid too much alcohol, fizzy drinks or caffeine that can irritate your bladder
* Take paracetamol or ibuprofen at regular intervals for pain relief, if you have had no previous side effects
* There is currently no evidence to support taking cranberry products or cystitis sachets to improve your symptoms
* Consider the risk factors in the

‘Options to help prevent UTI’ column to reduce future UTIs

##  It may help you to consider these risk factors:

* **Stop bacteria spreading from your bowel into your bladder.**

Wipe from front (vagina) to back (bottom) after using the toilet.

* **Avoid waiting to pass urine.** Pass urine as soon as you need to.
* Go for a **wee after having sex to** flush out any bacteria that may be near the opening to the urethra.
* **Wash** the external vagina area with water before and after sex to wash away any bacteria that may be near the opening to the urethra.
* **Drink** enough fluids to make sure you wee regularly throughout the day, especially during hot weather.

##  If you have a recurrent UTI, the following may help

* **Cranberry products and D-mannose:** There is some evidence to say that these work to help prevent recurrent UTI
* **After the menopause:** Topical hormonal treatment may help; for example, vaginal pessaries.
* Antibiotics at night or after sex may be considered

Antibiotics can be lifesaving. **But antibiotics are not always needed for urinary**

## symptoms.

Antibiotics taken by mouth, **for any reason,**

affect our gut bacteria making some resistant.

This may make future UTI more difficult to treat

Common **side effects** to taking antibiotics include thrush, rashes, vomiting and diarrhoea. Seek medical advice if you are worried.

**Keep antibiotics working;** only take them when advised by a health professional. This way they are more likely to work for a future UTI.

## The following symptoms are possible

**signs of serious infection and should be assessed urgently.**

Phone for advice if you are not sure how urgent the symptoms are.

1. You have shivering, chills and muscle pain
2. You feel confused, or are very drowsy
3. You have not passed urine all day
4. You are vomiting
5. You see blood in your urine
6. Your temperature is above 38oC or less than 36oC.
7. You have kidney pain in your back just under the ribs
8. Your symptoms get worse
9. Your symptoms are not starting to improve within 48 hours of taking antibiotics

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