



TARGET

Keep Antibiotics Working

TARGET Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) Leaflet for all adults

A step-by-step guide on how to manage your infection

User Guide

This leaflet has been designed for use in the primary care setting, including general practice, community pharmacy and for use by carers and in care homes. It is suitable for consultations to facilitate dialogue between a patient or their carer and their healthcare professional on specific topics related to managing their UTI.

What are the aims of the Urinary Tract Infection leaflet?

The leaflet aims to give easy and accessible information to patients, in line with NICE guidance on:

- Possible signs and symptoms of a UTI
- How people can self-care
- Explicit advice on when to seek medical help
- Appropriate antibiotic use and the side effects of antibiotic

Overview of the leaflet

The leaflet follows behavioural steps which help the reader to make decisions on how to manage their own infection. The behavioural steps are:

1. What is a UTI?
2. What can you do to help prevent a UTI?
3. What symptoms should I look out for?
4. What can I do to feel better?
5. Advice about antibiotics
6. When should I get more urgent help?

The collage shows various sections of the leaflet, including:

- What symptoms should I look out for?** Signs and symptoms in all adults: Burning pain when peeing, Peeing at night more often than usual, Cloudy urine, Peeing more often than usual, Feeling the need to pee immediately, Blood in your urine, Pain in your lower tummy.
- Symptoms of a UTI in older, frail adults** These symptoms may be more noticeable in older, frail adults: Wetting yourself more often than usual, New or increased confusion, change in behaviour, or being unsteady on your feet, High or low temperature, Shivering or shaking.
- What can I do to feel better?** What you can do: Drink enough fluids. Aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses of water or squash a day. Take paracetamol regularly, up to 4 times a day to relieve pain. You could try taking cranberry capsules or cystitis sachets. Some women find these effective. The evidence to support their use is inconclusive.
- What your pharmacist, nurse or doctor may do**: Give self-care advice and advise you to take pain relief (paracetamol or ibuprofen), Ask you for a urine sample to test, You may be given an antibiotic to take immediately.
- When should I get more urgent help?** You should see a health professional if you have UTI symptoms and: your symptoms are getting a lot worse, or not starting to improve within 2 days of starting antibiotics, or you are pregnant, male or you have recently had an operation.
- The following symptoms could be signs of a serious urinary infection and should be assessed urgently**: Shivering, chills and muscle pain, Temperature above 38°C or below 36°C, Not going for a pee all day, Kidney pain in your back just under the ribs, Trouble breathing, Very cold skin, Blood in your urine, Vomiting, Feeling very confused, drowsy, or having slurred speech.
- Advice about antibiotics**: Antibiotics can be life-saving for serious urine infections, but they are not always needed for mild urinary symptoms. Taking any antibiotics can make bacteria that live inside your body more resistant. This means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them. Taking antibiotics when you don't need them and your family at risk.
- Other things that may cause confusion in older adults**: Pain, Poor sleep, Constipation, Side effects of medicine, Poor diet, Other infection, Not drinking enough, Change in routine or home environment.
- What is a UTI?** A urinary tract infection (UTI) occurs when bacteria in any part of the urinary system cause symptoms. A diagnosis is made mainly on your symptoms. Urine dipstick tests are only used for women under 65 who don't have a catheter.
- What can I do to help prevent a UTI?** Are you drinking enough? Drink enough fluids. Regular drinks, like water or squash will boost hydration and help your body stay healthy. The NHS England Eastwell Guide recommends that people should aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluid a day. Your bladder can be irritated by too much alcohol, fizzy drink or caffeine. Stop bacteria spreading from your bowel into your bladder: Keep your genital area clean and dry. Avoid scented soaps. Change incontinence pads often, and clean your genital area if soiled. Pee after having sex.
- Repeated UTIs**: If you are female and past the menopause, vaginal hormone treatments may help. If you are male, ask for support from your healthcare professional. You could try taking cranberry dietary supplements, D-mannose (for younger women) or probiotics. Some women find these effective. The evidence to support their use is inconclusive.

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Why create the *Urinary Tract Infection* leaflet?

Patient satisfaction is more related to having a careful examination and having concerns identified and addressed than to receiving a prescription for antibiotics. This provides a great opportunity to share information with patients and reassure them. We know how busy prescribers are, and how important it is to use precious consultation time efficiently. Therefore, we have developed a leaflet to share with adults and their relatives or carers when they have urinary symptoms or with those who may be at risk of future UTIs.

Accessibility

This leaflet has been awarded with a Crystal Mark for use of plain English. The Crystal Mark is a seal of approval for the clarity of a document from the [Plain English Campaign](#).



The HTML webpage versions of the leaflet complies with [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.2](#) to ensure that the content can be accessed by a wider range of people with disabilities, including those with vision, hearing, speech and movement deficiencies, photosensitivity, learning disabilities and cognitive limitations, and combinations of these. These guidelines apply to the leaflet accessed via desktops, laptops, tablets, and mobile devices.

We are happy to receive feedback about how you have used this leaflet and any constructive comments on how it can be improved. Please contact the TARGET team via email at TARGETantibiotics@ukhsa.gov.uk.