**Treating your**

Urinary tract infection (UTI)

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

**Patients name** (optional): Click or tap here to enter text.



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**Types of urinary tract infection**

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)

**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)

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

* Drink enough fluids to stop you feeling thirsty. Aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses a day.
* Avoid too much alcohol, fizzy drink or caffeine as these can irritate your bladder.
* Take paracetamol or ibuprofen as advised for pain relief, if you have had no previous side effects.
* You could try taking cranberry capsules or cystitis sachets. Some women find these effective. The evidence to support their use is inconclusive.
* Consider the risk factors in the ‘Options to help prevent a UTI’ section to reduce future UTIs.

**When should you get help?**

**Contact your GP practice or NHS 111**

**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.**

* You have shivering, chills and muscle pain.
* You feel confused, or are very drowsy.
* You have not been for a pee all day.
* You are vomiting.
* You see blood in your urine.
* Your temperature is above 38°C or less than 36°C.
* You have kidney pain in your back just under the ribs.
* Your symptoms get worse.
* Your symptoms are not starting to improve within 48 hours of taking antibiotics.

**Antibiotic resistance**

* Antibiotics can be life-saving, but they are not always needed for 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.
* Common side effects of taking antibiotics include thrush, rashes, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Get 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.

**Options to help prevent a UTI**

**It may help you to consider the following 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 go to the toilet. Pee as soon as you need to.
* Go for a pee after having sex to flush out any bacteria that may be near the opening to the urethra.
* Wash the external vaginal 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 pee regularly throughout the day, especially during hot weather.

**If you have repeated UTIs, discuss this with a healthcare professional. The following may help.**

* There is good evidence to show that **vaginal hormonal treatment** may help after the menopause.
* You could try taking **cranberry products**, **D-mannose** or **probiotics**. Some women find these effective. The evidence to support their use is inconclusive.

**Immediate treatment with antibiotics,** plus self-care.

**If you are pregnant**

**Always ask for a urine culture test if a UTI is suspected.**

**Recommended care**

# 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 your symptoms:

* get worse, or do not get a little better with self-care within 48 hours.

**Immediate** treatment with antibiotics, plus self-care.

# If your symptoms are mild, start delayed or backup treatment with antibiotics, plus self-care.

**The outcome**

**If you are not pregnant**

**If you have none, or only one of, dysuria, new nocturia or cloudy urine, or you have a vaginal discharge (on its own or with any of the above):**

* + a UTI is much less likely
	+ you may need a urine test to check for a UTI
	+ antibiotics are less likely to help, and
	+ the infection will usually last 5 to 7 days.

# If you have 2 or more of dysuria, new nocturia, cloudy urine or bacteria in your urine and no vaginal discharge:

* + a UTI is more likely and antibiotics should help
	+ you should start to improve within 48 hours, and
	+ symptoms usually last 3 days.

**Possible urinary signs and symptoms**

**Key signs and symptoms**

* **Dysuria:** Burning pain when peeing
* **New nocturia:** Needing to pee in the night
* **Cloudy urine:** Pee looks cloudy

# Other signs and symptoms to consider

* **Frequency:** Peeing more often than usual
* **Urgency:** Feeling the need to pee immediately
* **Haematuria:** Blood in your urine
* **Suprapubic pain:** Pain in your lower tummy

# Other things to consider

# Recent sex

* Inflammation due to sex 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.