

# 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	COVID-19 specific advice
<p><b>Key signs/symptoms:</b>  <b>Dysuria:</b> Burning pain when passing urine (wee)  <b>New nocturia:</b> Needing to pass urine in the night  <b>Cloudy urine:</b> Visible cloudy colour when passing urine</p> <p><b>Other signs/symptoms to consider:</b>  <b>Frequency:</b> Passing urine more often than usual  <b>Urgency:</b> Feeling the need to pass urine immediately  <b>Haematuria:</b> Blood in your urine  <b>Suprapubic pain:</b> Pain in your lower tummy</p> <p><b>Other things to consider:</b>  <b>Recent sexual history</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inflammation due to sexual activity can feel similar to the symptoms of a UTI</li> <li>Some sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can have symptoms similar to those of a UTI</li> </ul> <p><b>Changes during menopause</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some changes during the menopause can have symptoms similar to those of a UTI</li> </ul>	<p><b>Non-pregnant women:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>If none or only one of: dysuria, new nocturia, cloudy urine; AND/OR vaginal discharge</b> →</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UTI much less likely</li> <li>You may need a urine test to check for a UTI</li> <li>Antibiotics less likely to help</li> <li>Usually lasts 5 to 7 days</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Self-care and pain relief.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symptoms may get better on their own</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Delayed or backup prescription with self-care and pain relief</b></p> <p>Start antibiotics if symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get worse</li> <li>Do not get a little better with self-care within 48 hours</li> </ul>	<p><b>Common symptoms of COVID-19 to look out for are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A loss of, or change to your sense of smell or taste</li> <li>A high temperature</li> <li>A new continuous cough</li> </ul> <p>• If you have any of these symptoms <b>and</b> think you may have a UTI <b>please do not ignore the UTI symptoms.</b></p> <p>• Book a COVID-19 test and self-isolate for 10 days or until you get a negative test result (<a href="http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test">www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test</a>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AND</b></p> <p>• Book a remote / online GP appointment to discuss your potential UTI and explain that you have also booked a COVID-19 test.</p> <p>Follow the latest advice on COVID-19 at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus">www.gov.uk/coronavirus</a> and <a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a></p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>If 2 or more of: dysuria, new nocturia, cloudy urine; OR bacteria detected in urine; AND NO vaginal discharge</b> →</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UTI more likely; antibiotics should help</li> <li>You should start to improve within 48 hours</li> <li>Symptoms usually last 3 days</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Immediate</b> antibiotic prescription plus self-care</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>If mild symptoms, delayed or back-up antibiotic prescription</b> plus self-care</p>	
	<p><b>Pregnant women:</b> Always request urine culture</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>If suspected UTI</b> →</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Immediate</b> antibiotic prescription plus self-care</p>	

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink enough fluids to stop you feeling thirsty. Aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses</li> <li>• Avoid too much alcohol, fizzy drinks or caffeine that can irritate your bladder</li> <li>• Take paracetamol or ibuprofen at regular intervals for pain relief, if you have had no previous side effects</li> <li>• There is currently no evidence to support taking cranberry products or cystitis sachets to improve your symptoms</li> <li>• Consider the risk factors in the 'Options to help prevent UTI' column to reduce future UTIs</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>It may help you to consider these risk factors:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stop bacteria spreading from your bowel into your bladder.</b> Wipe from front (vagina) to back (bottom) after using the toilet.</li> <li>• <b>Avoid waiting to pass urine.</b> Pass urine as soon as you need to.</li> <li>• Go for a <b>wee after having sex</b> to flush out any bacteria that may be near the opening to the urethra.</li> <li>• <b>Wash</b> the external vagina area with water before and after sex to wash away any bacteria that may be near the opening to the urethra.</li> <li>• <b>Drink</b> enough fluids to make sure you wee regularly throughout the day, especially during hot weather.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>If you have a recurrent UTI, the following may help</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cranberry products and D-mannose:</b> There is some evidence to say that these work to help prevent recurrent UTI</li> <li>• <b>After the menopause:</b> Topical hormonal treatment may help; for example, vaginal pessaries.</li> <li>• Antibiotics at night or after sex may be considered</li> </ul>	<p>Antibiotics can be lifesaving. <b>But antibiotics are not always needed for urinary symptoms.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Antibiotics taken by mouth, <b>for any reason</b>, affect our gut bacteria making some resistant.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>This may make future UTI more difficult to treat</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Common <b>side effects</b> to taking antibiotics include thrush, rashes, vomiting and diarrhoea. Seek medical advice if you are worried.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p><b>Keep antibiotics working;</b> only take them when advised by a health professional. This way they are more likely to work for a future UTI.</p>	<p><b>The following symptoms are possible signs of serious infection and should be assessed urgently.</b></p> <p>Phone for advice if you are not sure how urgent the symptoms are.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You have shivering, chills and muscle pain</li> <li>2. You feel confused, or are very drowsy</li> <li>3. You have not passed urine all day</li> <li>4. You are vomiting</li> <li>5. You see blood in your urine</li> <li>6. Your temperature is above 38°C* or less than 36°C.</li> <li>7. You have kidney pain in your back just under the ribs</li> <li>8. Your symptoms get worse</li> <li>9. Your symptoms are not starting to improve within 48 hours of taking antibiotics</li> </ol> <p><b>*Temperature above 38°C is also a symptom of COVID-19.</b> Please see COVID-19 specific advice.</p>