

# **Urinary tract infection (UTI) information leaflet**

For women outside care homes with suspected uncomplicated Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs), or uncomplicated recurrent UTIs

#### Types of urinary tract infection (UTI) Possible urinary symptoms The outcome Recommended care Frequency: Passing urine more often than usual Mild, or 1 to 2, symptoms and/ Self-care and pain relief UTIs are caused by bacteria getting into your urethra or Dysuria: Burning pain when passing urine or vaginal discharge bladder, usually from your gut. Infections may occur in · symptoms are likely to get different parts of the urinary tract: **Urgency**: Feeling the need to pass urine · Antibiotics less likely to help. better on their own. immediately Usually lasts 5 to 7 days. Kidneys (make urine) Haematuria: Blood in vour urine Infection in the upper urinary tract **Antibiotic prescription** Severe, or 3 or more, symptoms **Nocturia**: Needing to pass urine in the night • Pyelonephritis (pie-lo-nef-right-is) and no vaginal discharge Immediate treatment with Suprapubic pain: Pain in your lower tummy Bladder (stores urine) antibiotics, plus self-care. Antibiotics are likely to help. Other things to consider Infection in the lower urinary tract. With antibiotics: Start delayed or backup Cystitis (sis-tight-is) Recent sexual history treatment with antibiotics: · Symptoms should start to improve Some sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can within 48 hours. • if symptoms get worse Urethra (takes urine out of the body) have symptoms similar to those of a UTI. Infection or inflammation in the urethra Symptoms usually last 3 days. • if symptoms do not get a little better Inflammation due to sexual activity can feel • Urethritis- (your-ith-right-is) with self-care after 24 to 48 hours similar to the symptoms of a UTI.

# Self-care to help yourself get better more quickly

#### Drink enough fluids to stop you feeling thirsty. Aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses including water, decaffeinated and sugar-free drinks.

- Take paracetamol or ibuprofen at regular intervals for pain relief, if you've had no previous side effects.
- You could try taking cranberry capsules or cystitis sachets. These are effective for some women. There is currently little evidence to support their use.
- · Consider the risk factors in the 'Options to help prevent UTI' column to reduce future UTIs.

## When should you get help?

Contact your GP practice or contact NHS 111 (England,), NHS 24 (Scotland dial 111), or NHS direct (Wales dial 0845 4647)

#### 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 38°C or less than 36°C.
- 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 a little within 48 hours of taking antibiotics.

# Options to help prevent a UTI

It may help you to consider these risk factors:

Stop the spread of bacteria from your gut into your bladder: Wipe from front (vagina) to back (bottom) when you go to the toilet.

Avoid waiting to pass urine: Pass urine as soon as you need a wee.

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 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, also consider the following

Cranberry products: Some women find these effective, but there is currently little evidence to support this.

After the menopause: You could consider topical hormonal treatment, for example, vaginal creams.

### Antibiotic resistance

Antibiotics may not always be needed, only take them after advice from a health professional. This way they are more likely to work if you have a UTI in the future.

Antibiotics taken by mouth, for any reason, affect our gut bacteria. These bacteria become resistant to antibiotics we take.

Antibiotic resistance means that the antibiotics cannot kill that bacteria.

The gut bacteria that cause UTIs are twice as likely to be antibiotic resistant for at least 6 months after you have taken any antibiotic.

Common **side effects** to taking antibiotics include thrush, rashes, vomiting and diarrhoea.

www.antibioticguardian.com











