

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 (UTI)
<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 severe signs/symptoms:</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>  <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> <b>Changes during menopause</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some changes during the menopause can have symptoms similar to those of a UTI</li> </ul> </p>	<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>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><b>Pregnant women:</b> Always request urine culture</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>If suspected UTI</b> →</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Self-care and pain relief.</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symptoms may get better on their own</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Delayed or backup prescription with self-care and pain relief</b>            Start antibiotics if symptoms:           <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> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Immediate antibiotic prescription plus self-care</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>If mild symptoms, delayed or back-up antibiotic prescription plus self-care</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Immediate antibiotic prescription plus self-care</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p><b>Kidneys (make urine)</b>            Infection in the upper urinary tract  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pyelonephritis (pie-lo-nef-right-is). Not covered in this leaflet and always needs antibiotics</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Bladder (stores urine)</b>            Infection in the lower urinary tract  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cystitis (sis-tight-is).</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Urethra (takes urine out of the body)</b>            Infection or inflammation in the urethra  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urethritis (your-ith-right-is)</li> </ul> </p>

Self-care to help yourself get better more quickly	When should you get help? Contact your GP practice or contact NHS	Options to help prevent a UTI	Antibiotic resistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drink enough fluids to stop you feeling thirsty. Aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses including water, decaffeinated and sugar-free drinks</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>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>You have shivering, chills and muscle pain</li> <li>You feel confused, or are very drowsy</li> <li>You have not passed urine all day</li> <li>You are vomiting</li> <li>You see blood in your urine</li> <li>Your temperature is above 38°C or less than 36°C</li> <li>You have kidney pain in your back just under the ribs</li> <li>Your symptoms get worse</li> <li>Your symptoms are not starting to improve within 48 hours of taking antibiotics</li> </ol>	<p><b>It may help you to consider these risk factors:</b></p> <p><b>Stop bacteria spreading from your bowel into your bladder.</b> Wipe from front (vagina) to back (bottom) after using the toilet.</p> <p><b>Avoid waiting to pass urine.</b> Pass urine as soon as you need a wee.</p> <p>Go for a <b>wee after having sex</b> to flush out any bacteria that may be near the opening to the urethra.</p> <p><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.</p> <p><b>Drink</b> enough fluids to make sure you wee regularly throughout the day, especially during hot weather.</p> <p><b>If you have a recurrent UTI, the following may help</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 creams.</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>↓</p> <p>Antibiotics taken by mouth, <b>for any reason</b>, affect our gut bacteria making some resistant.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Antibiotic resistance means that the antibiotics <b>cannot kill that bacteria.</b></p> <p>↓</p> <p><b>Antibiotic resistant bacteria</b> can remain in your gut for <b>at least a year</b> after taking an antibiotic.</p> <p>↓</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>↓</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>