

Who to contact

Contact your GP practice or Pharmacist within working hours or contact 111 out of hours for advice. Trust your instincts, ask for advice if you are not sure how urgent the symptoms are.

Compliments, comments, concerns or complaints

Patient Liaison -

may be the best starting point if you have a question or concern about the NHS. If you would like to find an NHS dentist, know where your nearest doctor is or talk through a problem you have had with a service, you can contact the PALS service.

To contact Patient Liaison Team:

Call 01502 445447

Monday to Friday,

Email: patientliaison@ecchcic.nhs.uk

Or write to:

Patient Liaison Team

East Coast Community Healthcare

Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE



Urinary Tract Infections (UTI)

Patient Information leaflet

If you would like this leaflet in large print, audio cassette, Braille or in a different language please contact Communications Team on 01502 445445 or Email: comms@ecchcic.nhs.uk

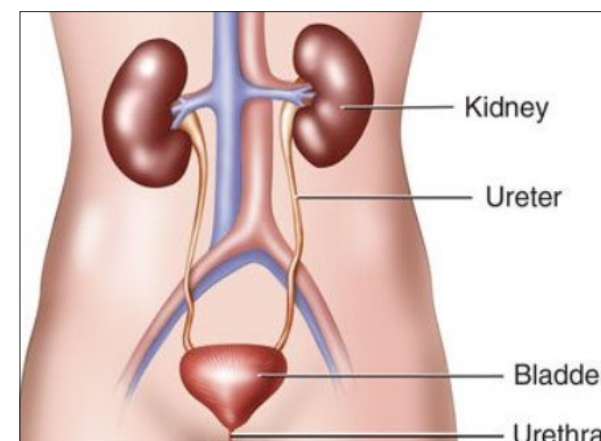
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Se pretender uma cópia desta publicação no seu idioma, por favor contacte Communications Team on 01502 445445 or Email: comms@ecchcic.nhs.uk



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What is a urinary tract infection (UTI)?

A UTI is an infection in any part of your urinary system — your kidneys, ureters, bladder and urethra. Most infections involve the lower urinary tract — the bladder and the urethra.

A urine infection occurs when bacteria in any part of the urine system cause symptoms. Two or more new symptoms may be suggestive of a UTI.

- Pain or burning when passing urine
- High or low temperature
- Urgency (feeling the need to urinate immediately)
- Pain in your lower tummy above pubic area
- Incontinence (wetting yourself more often than usual)
- Passing urine more often than usual
- Cloudy urine, or visible blood in your urine
- Confusion, change in behaviour, or unsteadiness on feet
- **Men:** Inability to start urinating with and/or release of only small amounts of urine at a time

How do you test for a UTI?

If you are under the age of 65, based on symptoms, you may be prescribed antibiotics or asked for a urine sample which may then be tested with a urine dipstick. If this dipstick is positive to blood, protein, nitrates and leucocytes, a urine sample will be sent to be tested to see if the bacteria in the urine are sensitive to antibiotics, this may take 24-48 hours for a result. Please ask for the **mid-stream urine sample (MSU) leaflet** if you are asked to produce a urine sample.

If you are over 65 a routine dipstick is not required this is because the results of these tests become less reliable with increasing age. Up to half of older adults will have bacteria present in their urine which will test positive on a urine dipstick test but does not mean you have an infection. Antibiotics are not beneficial and may cause harm in these circumstances. Your GP/ Nurse will assess based on your symptoms and may request a urine sample.

What if it is not a UTI?

Other possible causes of your symptoms may be;

- Dehydration
- Side effects of medicine
- A different infection
- Poor diet
- Constipation
- **Women:** Vaginal atrophy (If you have a dry and sore vagina ask your Health Care Professional about this condition).

What you can do to alleviate the symptoms

- Drink enough fluid so that you pass urine regularly during the day, especially during hot weather.
- Drink enough fluids to avoid feeling thirsty and to keep your urine a pale colour
- Take paracetamol regularly, up to four times daily to relieve fever and pain.

If you're worried about wetting yourself, see your Health Care Professional for advice.

What you can do to help prevent a urine infection

- Drink enough so that you pass pale coloured urine regularly during the day.
- Avoid drinking too many fizzy drinks or alcohol.
- Prevent constipation. Ask for advice if needed.
- Maintain good control of diabetes.
- **Women:** Stop bacteria spreading from your bowel into your bladder (wipe front to back after using the toilet),
- Change incontinence pads immediately if soiled).
- Wash with water before and after sex.

What might your pharmacist/nurse/doctor do?

- If your symptoms are likely to get better on their own you may receive self-care advice and pain relief
- Ask you to drink more fluids
- Ask for a urine sample if you have 2 or more signs and symptoms. You may be given an antibiotic with self-care advice.

Always trust your pharmacist/nurse/doctor advice about antibiotics

- Antibiotics can be life saving for serious urine infections
- Remember to always complete the course
- Antibiotics are not always needed for urinary symptoms
- Common side effects of taking antibiotics include thrush, rashes, vomiting and diarrhoea
- Antibiotics affect the bacteria in your bowel, which may make them resistant to antibiotics for at least a year
- Keep antibiotics working: only take them when your doctor, nurse advises

Although a UTI is one of the most common infections in women, it is uncommon in men.