

Treatment for urinary tract infections

A urinary tract infection (UTI) occurs when any part of the urinary system becomes infected, usually by bacteria. Infections most commonly involve the lower part of the system which includes the bladder and urethra. When the upper part of the system involving the kidneys and ureters are involved it is more serious.

What are the symptoms of urinary tract infections?

The symptoms can include;

- Pain or burning sensation when passing urine
- Increased need to pass urine
- Mild fever
- Feeling that you are unable to urinate fully
- Pain in your lower abdomen
- Urine which is cloudy, bloody or bad-smelling

Symptoms of an upper urinary tract infection also include;

- High fever
- Nausea or vomiting
- Shaking or chills
- Pain in lower back or side

What causes urinary tract infections?

The bacteria that cause UTIs are typically those which live in your colon. The bacteria get into the opening of the urethra and multiply in the bladder.

Do I need antibiotics?

Urinary tract infections can be treated with antibiotics. Lower urinary tract infections only require a 3 day course.

Prevention

There are some things that you can do to reduce the risk of getting a urinary tract infection.

- Drink plenty of liquids, especially water as it helps to wash bacteria from your bladder. Some people find cranberry juice helpful but do not take if you are on warfarin
- Go to the toilet when you need to rather than holding it in
- Empty your bladder after sex
- Wash your genitals every day and before having sex
- Wipe from front to back after going to the toilet

When should I come back and see the doctor?

If your symptoms do not settle 1 week after completing the course of antibiotics.

We thank the doctors at Bishops Castle Medical Practice who created the original version of this leaflet