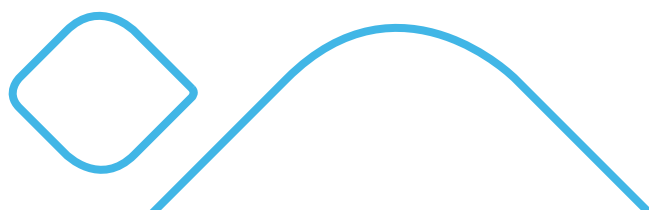


# Advice for women with recurrent UTI's

## This leaflet explains:

- Why and how you get urine infections
- What to do if you do get a urine infection
- Symptoms of a urine infection
- What you can do to prevent getting urine infections

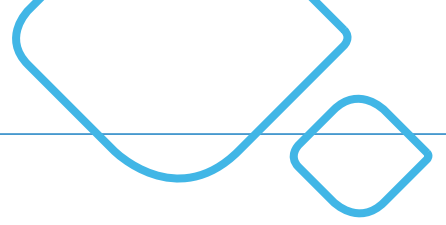


## Why do I get urine infections?

- Urine infections are usually caused by bacteria that occur naturally in the bowel
- In women the urethra (water pipe) is short so bacteria can easily find their way into the bladder and cause infection
- Bacteria can find it easier to get into the bladder when you are having sexual intercourse
- Constipation leads to an increased build-up of bacteria in your body, which may lead to a greater risk of urinary tract infections

## Symptoms of a urine infection

- Mild urinary symptoms such as stinging and wanting to pass urine frequently despite drinking 1.5litres -2 litres a day.
- High temperatures
- If there is no improvement, get a sample from the middle of your urine stream in a sterile container and take to your GP. **It is really important not to collect the first urine that you pass as this is always full of bacteria, dead cells and secretions which will lead to incorrect results in the laboratory. Collect your sample from the middle of your stream.** If there are signs of infection in this sample you may be prescribed a short course of antibiotics.



## How can I prevent myself getting urine infections?

NICE – (National Institute for Health & Care Excellence) – recommends behavioural and personal hygiene measures to reduce the risk of urinary tract infections, such as:

- Drinking 1.5-2L per 24hours of non-caffeinated and non-fizzy fluids.
- Ensure that when wiping yourself after passing urine, you always wipe from front to back.
- After a bowel movement, clean the area around the anus gently wiping from front to back and repeating with the same tissue. Soft, non- scented tissue is recommended.
- Shower instead of taking a bath and avoid using scented soaps.
- Avoid using feminine hygiene sprays and scented douches.
- Cotton, unrestricted underwear is recommended.
- Avoid long intervals between urination ( more than 4 hours)
- Avoid constipation which leads to overgrowth of the bacteria which cause urine infections.
- Avoid using a vaginal diaphragm for birth control
- Empty your bladder after sexual intercourse, as sex can often 'push' bacteria up the urethra.
- D-mannose (200ml of 1% solution once daily in the evening) has been shown to significantly reduce the risk of recurrent urinary tract infections in non-pregnant women (contains sugar)
- Some non-pregnant women find that drinking a small amount of cranberry juice with no added sugar 2-3 times daily or using cranberry tablets can reduce the number of infections they get. (Discuss with your GP first if you are on Warfarin tablets)

## Contact details

If you need further information or have any questions, please contact:  
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm:

Urology Outpatients Reception **01225 825990**

Urology Nurse Specialists **01225 924034**

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG

01225 428331 | [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email [ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656 / 826319.

If you would like this leaflet in email form, large print, braille or another language, please contact the Patient Support and Complaints team on 01225 825656.

