

HEALTH TOPICS

URINARY TRACT INFECTION (UTI)

Overview

- Cystitis (inflammation of the bladder) is the common medical term for a bacterial infection of the bladder.
- There are numerous bacteria present around the urinary opening.
- Bacteria can be introduced into the bladder from the vagina or rectum during sexual intercourse or oral-genital contact.
- Bacteria can also be introduced into the bladder from the vagina or rectum from other sources such as fingers or objects.

Signs & Symptoms

- Frequent urination
- Urgency to urinate
- Painful urination
- Blood in the urine
- Pressure sensation in the lower abdomen or a feeling of pressure
- Fever, chills
- Pain in the lower or mid-back
- Foul odor to the urine

Treatment

- Antibiotics are needed to treat bladder infections. It is important to complete all the medication prescribed. Bladder infections left untreated may develop into a kidney infection. This is a serious complication and you could feel quite ill.
- You should notice improvement within 48 hours or sooner. If no improvement within 48 hours, please return for further evaluation.
- Please seek medical evaluation immediately for fever, shaking, chills, nausea/vomiting or mid-back ("flank") pain.
- Self-care includes;
 1. Drinking a lot of fluids, primarily water and non-caffeinated liquids.
 2. Urinary analgesics, which are available without a prescription at Student Health Center or at any pharmacy, may be helpful for the temporary relief of urinary pain but they do not kill bacteria. This type of medication will turn the urine bright orange.

Prevention

- Drink plenty of water
- Urinate frequently, do not postpone the need to urinate
- Wipe front to back after using the toilet

- Wear cotton underwear and avoid wearing tight clothing for extended periods of time.
- Urinate after sex to help wash away bacteria. If you are only able to void a small quantity after intercourse drink 8 ounces of liquid so you will be able to void a larger quantity in 2-3 hours
- Pure cranberry juice or cranberry capsules may prevent a bladder infection for some women. Cranberry juice cannot cure a bladder infection. Vitamin C 500mg four times a day or one gram-sustained release two times a day may help

How We Can Help

- Women with symptoms of a UTI can be seen by our [Advice Nurse](#) for evaluation and treatment or referral to Urgent Care if indicated. You do not need to schedule an appointment, just go to the appointment desk in the main lobby and the scheduler will book you in to see the Advice Nurse
- Men with symptoms of a UTI can book an appointment online or by calling our Appointment Desk to [schedule an appointment](#). You can also come in our Urgent Care Clinic during our regular hours, no appointment necessary.
- [Over the counter \(OTC\) products](#) such urinary analgesics and cranberry capsules are available for purchase at our Pharmacy, which is located in the lobby of UCSB Student Health Service.

Recommended Resources

- Urinary Tract Infections (Up-to- date) <http://www.uptodate.com/contents/urinary-tract-infections-in-adolescents-and-adults-beyond-the-basics>
- Urinary Tract Infections (Mayo Clinic) <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/urinary-tract-infection/basics/symptoms/con-20037892>
- Urinary Tract Infections (WebMD) <http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/urinary-tract-infections-in-teens-and-adults-topic-overview>

