

Preventing Urinary Tract Infections



There are several ways to **prevent urinary tract infections**. First and foremost, empty your bladder regularly. Use the bathroom every three to four hours; don't go all day without using the bathroom. Use the bathroom soon after you feel the urge, and before and after having sexual intercourse.

Drinking Fluids

You should also drink lots of fluids. Drink at least eight eight-ounce glasses of liquids a day, unless you are on a fluid restriction. If you do not like water, it is okay to add a small amount of lemonade or fruit punch to each glass. Avoid caffeine, carbonated drinks and artificial sweeteners.

Drinking cranberry juice (ten ounces) or taking cranberry tablets (500 milligrams) each day may help prevent bacteria from multiplying or sticking to the bladder wall.

Avoiding Over-treating

It is not always necessary to treat a bacteria in the urine if there are no symptoms (for example, burning while urinating, high urinating frequency and urgency to urinate). Overusing antibiotics can lead to secondary infections of the bowel, such as *C. difficile*.

Your treatment should be based on a urine culture. After you drop off the urine, it takes around three days to get the urine culture results.

Using Supplements & Aids

You can use additional aids to help prevent bladder infections. You can take a 1,000-milligram tablet of vitamin C twice a day. (Although, use caution if you have a history of bladder or kidney stones.)

D-mannose is an over-the-counter supplement to prevent UTIs. D-mannose assists in removing the bad bacteria from your urinary tract. Follow dose guidelines on the supplement bottle.

Women can take probiotics containing acidophilus, which is a way to increase the acidity of the vaginal flora and create an unfavorable environment for bacteria to grow. Women can also use a vaginal estrogen cream by prescription only; twice a week, apply a small amount (the size of a pea) to the tissue around where the bladder opens. This is not recommended for women who have a history of breast cancer or heart disease.

When to Call the Office

Call the office if you are experiencing any of the following:

- Increased urinary urgency, frequency or pain while urinating
- Urinating small amounts
- Bad-smelling urine
- Fever or chills
- Blood in the urine



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