

Do antibiotics help?

- Symptoms of cystitis may not always be caused by bacteria.
- Even if the cystitis is due to an infection it often goes away within a few days without antibiotics, particularly mild cases.
- If you have to contact your medical practice for advice, your doctor or nurse will need to examine you and may test your urine sample before deciding with you whether an antibiotic or another treatment is needed.
- Everyone needs to use antibiotics wisely. Using them too much, or when they are not needed, encourages bacteria to become resistant. This means in the future the antibiotic may no longer be effective against the bacteria.
- Antibiotics themselves can also cause side effects such as diarrhoea, skin rashes and stomach upsets.

CYSTITIS?

Antibiotics are not the answer in most cases.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you would like to find out more about self-treating common health problems ask your pharmacist, call the free healthline on 08085 202030 or email healthpoint@nhs.net

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WHEN YOU'RE ILL,
KNOW WHO TO TURN TO.



What might be the cause of cystitis?

If you need to pass water (urine) more often or urgently, you get a burning or stinging feeling when you do and you have no discharge, you probably have cystitis. This may be due to bacteria causing inflammation of the wall of the bladder. Often the symptoms will get better in a few days, particularly mild cases, without the need for antibiotics.

Women get this more often than men because their urethra (the passage from the bladder to the outside) is shorter and it is easier for bacteria to get into the bladder.

You can avoid cystitis by always drinking plenty of fluids (at least 2 litres a day), urinating as soon as you feel the need, and especially after sexual intercourse. This rinses your bladder and keeps it healthy and clear of bacteria.

If you are, or might be, pregnant you should contact your medical practice.

These symptoms are not common in men. If men think they have cystitis they should contact their medical practice. Similarly, if you think your child has cystitis, contact your medical practice.

What can you do?

- Drink plenty of fluids – at least 2 litres a day.
- Cranberry juice may be helpful and it is also available as capsules (avoid if taking warfarin).
- Take a painkiller such as paracetamol or ibuprofen regularly according to the dosage instructions. Ibuprofen may not be suitable for everyone – check with your pharmacist before starting.
- Avoid sexual intercourse until the problem is better.
- Avoid soaking in the bath, if possible have showers instead.
- Avoid 'feminine' deodorants.

How can your community pharmacy help?

- Many Community Pharmacies in Grampian now offer a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) screening service. Please contact your Community Pharmacy to find out if and when they provide this service.
- Your pharmacy team can advise on which medicines would be best to help you manage your symptoms.

- Your pharmacist can also check that any medication for your cystitis does not interact with any medication you have been prescribed by your doctor.

When should you contact your medical practice?

Contact your medical practice if your Community Pharmacist recommends assessment of your symptoms by a member of the GP practice team or if:

- The symptoms are severe
- There is no improvement after two days
- You feel worse – such as developing a temperature, or pain in the kidney area of your back
- There is blood in your urine
- You have a vaginal discharge.

If you visit your medical practice please take a small (10-20ml) fresh urine sample with you in a clean container.

You should contact your medical practice urgently if you are concerned that you may be seriously unwell.