

## A fact sheet for older adults and carers

### What is a urinary tract infection (UTI)?

A UTI occurs when bacteria in any part of the urine system causes symptoms. If a urine test finds bacteria but you are otherwise well, do not worry as this is common and you won't usually need antibiotics.

However, please also be aware that severe urine infections can be life threatening so should **NOT** be ignored.

### What can you do to help prevent a urine infection?

#### Are you drinking enough? Look at the colour of your urine



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drink enough fluids (6-8 glasses) to pass pale coloured urine regularly during the day, and to avoid feeling thirsty, especially during hot weather</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid drinking too many fizzy drinks or alcohol</li></ul>                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prevent constipation. Ask for advice if needed</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If diabetic, maintain good control of the condition</li></ul>                             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stop bacteria spreading from your bowel into your bladder. Wipe from front to back after using the toilet</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid waiting to pass urine. Pass urine as soon as you need a wee</li></ul>               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empty your bladder after having sex</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practise good hygiene by washing your genitals every day, and before having sex</li></ul> |

Note: not all UTIs are preventable

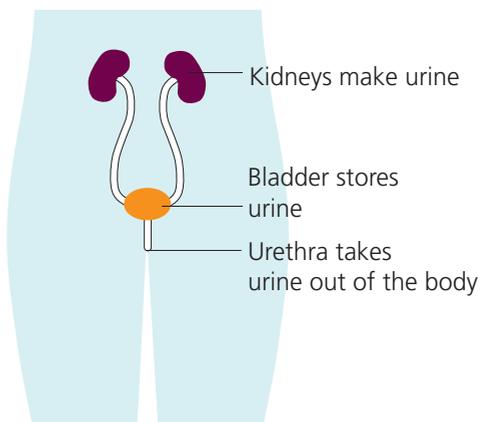
## What are symptoms of a UTI?

There are many symptoms which can differ from person to person as well as the severity of these:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain or a burning sensation when peeing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Urgency (feeling the need to urinate immediately)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Smelly or cloudy pee</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Blood in your pee</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain in your lower tummy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kidney pain in your back just under the ribs</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shivering or shaking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High or low temperature</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feeling tired and unwell</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Changes in behaviour such as severe confusion or agitation</li></ul>

## What should I do if I suspect I have a UTI?

- If your symptoms improve with self-care and pain relief, you may not need to seek medical advice.
- If you are unsure of your symptoms and would like initial advice, contact your local pharmacist or dial NHS 111.
- If your symptoms persist or do not start to improve, make an appointment to see either a nurse or doctor.



**For more information, visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)**