



Self Help for Cystitis Symptoms

If you have urgency or burning when passing urine, you may well have cystitis. This is especially true if this is a sudden attack. Increasing your fluid intake may cure the problem. If the symptoms persist, then antibiotics are probably needed. If however you suffer from frequent infections, certain self-help measures may be useful. Likewise if the symptoms persist despite negative tests for bacteria and there is no obvious infection, then these measures may be worth a try.

If you are prone to cystitis it is important to drink a reasonable amount of fluids throughout the day. If you should have a severe attack of cystitis then fluids taken every hour will help this. Please remember that for other bladder problems such as, very bad urgency and frequency problems, an excess of fluids can make this problem worse.

After sex or a bowel movement, you should always wash carefully with warm, un-perfumed soapy water, making sure that you wipe yourself from front to back; this will wash any germs away. Try to use un-perfumed bath products as in some cases this can cause allergies which can inflame the urethra, if you do have any reaction you should also avoid using deodorants, perfumes and sprays.

If you have discomfort when passing urine, try changing the acidity of the urine. You can do this by adding a small amount of sodium bicarbonate to your drinking water, or by buying potassium citrate mixture or tablets.

Some condoms and supermicrobicidal jellies contain the compound Nonoxynol-9; this can make the vagina more prone to harbouring the bacteria that cause cystitis. If this does affect you try changing your contraception.

After the menopause the vagina becomes dryer and can encourage bacteria to form causing cystitis. Using HRT or some oestrogen creams or pessaries, twice a week might help.

Tight underclothes, tights and jeans may cause the area around the vagina and urethra to become contaminated with faecal bacteria so try to avoid this if possible.

If you have cystitis, avoid certain foods and drinks which are known to irritate the bladder. The potential list is long but some of the most notorious include coffee, tea, chocolate, citrus fruits, tomatoes, old cheese, alcohol (especially red wine), fizzy drinks vitamin C supplements and artificial sweeteners.

Alternative remedies, which have proved useful for some women, include Homeopathic remedies and Aromatherapy Homeopathic preparations are available from health food shops such as Holland and Barratt.

Helpful Addresses

Bladder Health UK

T: 0161 214 4591

E: bbuk@disabledliving.co.uk

Mon- Fri 09.00 – 16.30

Information for Patients

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk.