



Mild Cystitis

Cystitis is inflammation of the bladder, usually caused by a bladder infection. It's a common type of urinary tract infection (UTI), particularly in women, and is usually more of a nuisance than a cause for serious concern. Mild cases will often get better by themselves within a few days.

However, some people experience episodes of cystitis frequently and may need regular or long-term treatment. The main symptoms of cystitis include:

- pain, burning or stinging when you wee
- needing to wee more often and urgently than normal
- urine that's dark, cloudy or strong smelling
- pain low down in your tummy
- feeling generally unwell, achy, sick and tired

Possible symptoms in young children include a high temperature (fever) of 38C (100.4F) or above, weakness, irritability, reduced appetite and vomiting.

How can I avoid triggers/ suggested lifestyle changes

If you get cystitis frequently, there are some things you can try that may stop it coming back. However, it's not clear how effective most of these measures are.

These measures include:

- not using perfumed bubble bath, soap or talcum powder around your genitals – use plain, unperfumed varieties
- having a shower, rather than a bath – this avoids exposing your genitals to the chemicals in your cleaning products for too long
- going to the toilet as soon as you need to wee and always emptying your bladder fully
- staying well hydrated – drinking plenty of fluids may help to stop bacteria multiplying in your bladder
- always wiping your bottom from front to back when you go to the toilet
- emptying your bladder as soon as possible after having sex
- not using a diaphragm for contraception – you may wish to use another method of contraception instead
- wearing underwear made from cotton, rather than synthetic material such as nylon, and not wearing tight jeans and trousers

Drinking cranberry juice has traditionally been recommended as a way of reducing your chances of getting cystitis. However, large studies have suggested it doesn't make a significant difference.

How do I treat?

If you've had cystitis before and don't feel you need to see your GP, you may want to treat your symptoms at home. Until you're feeling better, it may help to:

- take [paracetamol](#) or [ibuprofen](#)
- drink plenty of water
- hold a hot water bottle on your tummy or between your thighs
- avoid having sex

Some people find it helpful to try over-the-counter products that reduce the acidity of their urine (such as sodium bicarbonate or potassium citrate), but there's a lack of evidence to suggest they're effective.

When should I seek advice?

Women don't necessarily need to see their GP if they have cystitis, as mild cases often get better without treatment. You can try the self-help measures listed above or ask your pharmacist for advice.



See your GP if:

- your symptoms don't start to improve within a few days
- you get cystitis frequently
- you have severe symptoms, such as [blood in your urine](#), a fever or pain in your side
- you're pregnant and have symptoms of cystitis
- you're a man and have symptoms of cystitis
- your child has symptoms of cystitis

Your GP should be able to diagnose cystitis by asking about your symptoms. They may test a sample of your urine for bacteria to help confirm the diagnosis.

More information is available at the following websites

- NHS Choices - www.nhs.uk
- Stay Well Derbyshire – www.derbyandderbyshireccg.nhs.uk/staywellederbyshire/
- Or visit your local pharmacy for advice