

Cystitis

Cystitis is a bladder infection. Women have a shorter urethra than men, so they are more likely to get cystitis. Cystitis is not typically a serious condition.

Some women suffer from recurrent urinary tract infections (UTI) although there is no apparent reason. Risk factors for cystitis: sexual intercourse, use of spermicides or diaphragm, some antibiotics, menopause and changes in the urinary tract, among other causes. There may be a genetic predisposition. On the other hand, no association with obesity, use of tampons or hygiene habits has been demonstrated.

Older people often get infections that do not cause any problems and generally do not need to be treated. In most cases when bacteria are found in a urine sample but there are no symptoms, no treatment is necessary.

What are the symptoms?

It often starts suddenly with a burning feeling or pain when urinating. Other signs include: a feeling of pressure in the lower abdomen, a frequent urge to urinate but only small amounts. It may cause some incontinence and hematuria (blood in the urine), which most of the time is not serious.

How is cystitis diagnosed?

Diagnosis is usually based on the symptoms. Dipstick test is sometimes done and on occasion a urine culture may be necessary. Your doctor will decide what type of treatment is best for you.

When should you worry about cystitis?

Special attention should be paid if it occurs in children, men and pregnant women or in case

of a serious illness, a disorder of the urinary tract or kidneys (stones, etc.) or diabetes.

In case of fever, you must consult your doctor right away.



How can you prevent cystitis?

Tips that can help to prevent recurrent cystitis in women are: drinking enough water so you have to urinate every 2 to 3 hours, making sure you empty your bladder completely each time you urinate, doing pelvic floor exercises and using lubricant during sex and urinating afterward.

Your doctor may recommend a preventive treatment (cranberry products, antibiotics, estrogen vaginal cream, etc.).

Do not take any medication for UTIs unless directed by your doctor as it may cause the infection to recur and the bacteria to become resistant.