

Urinary tract infection: Facts you must know

Urinary tract infection (UTI) is a common type of infection that can affect any part of the urinary tract, including the urethra, ureter, bladder and kidneys. Though it can occur to anyone at any age, it is more common among women.

DR TRISITA SAHA BISWAS

Urinary tract infection (UTI) is a common type of infection that can affect any part of the urinary tract, including the urethra, ureter, bladder and kidneys. Though it can occur to anyone at any age, it is more common among women. It is estimated that at least 40 to 60% of women will suffer from UTIs at some point in their lives. Women are more prone to recurrent UTIs as well.

UTI is caused by microorganisms that enter through the urethra (opening through which the urine pass outside the body) into the urinary tract and cause infection. It is most common among females as their urethra is shorter, allowing bacteria to reach and infect the bladder more easily. Also, in females, the urethra is closer to the anus, where many microorganisms reside.

Some conditions increase the risk of UTI, like pregnancy, kidney stones, enlarged prostate, weak immune system (diabetes or people taking chemotherapy), people having urinary catheters, etc. Besides, people who don't maintain genital hygiene or don't drink sufficient amounts of fluids are also at risk of getting infected. Recurrent UTIs might be due to any underlying health conditions, such as diabetes or any defect in the urinary system.

UTI symptoms may include a burning sensation or pain during urinating, fever, increased frequency of urination, pain in the abdomen or pelvic area, urgency, urine leakage, discolouration or blood in urine,



and so on. In addition, older, frail people or people with a urinary catheter may present agitation or confusion, wetting the bed more than usual and chills and rigour. Unfortunately, many people overlook these symptoms and remain untreated for long. As a result, it turns into serious complications, for instance, recurrent infections, permanent kidney damage, urethral stricture (narrowing) and sepsis (widespread infection throughout the body, a potentially life-threatening condition).

Anyone with these symptoms should visit a physician for early diagnosis and treatment. But one should also follow some steps to prevent it from occurring in the first place. The first and foremost duty is to practise good genital hygiene. Women should wipe front to back after toileting, change pads frequently during menstruation, avoid using feminine products in or around the genital area, such as deodorant sprays or powder

and keep the genital area clean and dry.

Moreover, one should pass urine immediately after intercourse and avoid having sugary foods or drinks, as it may assist bacteria in growing. Also, one should not hold urine for a long time as it may favour any circulating microorganism in the bladder to establish an infection. Maintaining hydration is crucial; at least six to eight glasses of water per day will help to flush down the extra bacteria from the urinary tract. Tight, synthetic underwear should be avoided to keep the genital area dry.

UTIs respond very well to treatment. However, prevention is far more effective. Therefore, a conscious person should follow the guidelines to prevent urinary tract infection in the first place.

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Deal with your frustration

DR SAYEDUL ASHRAF

Frustration is commonly seen in modern times, especially in youngsters and students. Self-harm and suicide, therefore, are on the rise. Here are a few ways to escape:

Having a direction in life: Having no direction is the root cause of frustration. Every day is a struggle when we do not know what success means and where we want to end up. We should know the 'why' of our lives. This will help us manage our activities. We will be confident and motivated.

Proper planning: Following directions, proper planning is needed. A 20 year plan should be divided into five years, one year, three months, and seven days. We must make a list of tasks to start, stop, and continue to reach our goals.

If we cannot plan, we should seek help from a trusted expert.



Practice gratitude:

Without gratitude, we will never be happy.

Some do not have money, while others do not have health or family. Everyone has flaws and failures. Human beings are not defined by their circumstances but by their decisions to move on and be happy. Gratitude helps us tremendously.

Recognising feelings of frustration is the first step to overcoming them. If you continue to have issues with frustration and anger, speak with a professional or consider joining a support group.

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Constrictive bronchiolitis — A possible adverse effect of vaping

Lung biopsies showed this pathology in four e-cigarette users. Electronic cigarette or vaping-associated lung injury (EVALI) is a well-described acute condition, but we know little about its long-term repercussions.

In this paper, researchers describe four patients (aged 25–65) with 3- to 8-year e-cigarette histories who presented with lung symptoms consistent with gradually progressive pulmonary disease (e.g., dyspnoea, cough, pleuritic chest pain). At presentation, all patients were former smokers who vaped daily. On high-resolution computed tomography, all patients revealed modest bronchial wall thickening and other nonspecific abnormalities.

The lung biopsy results were interesting and crucial. Patients developed constrictive bronchiolitis with subepithelial fibrosis. No patient had a history of other inhalation exposures or conditions known to produce this pathology; constrictive bronchiolitis is not caused by cigarette smoking. Three patients who stopped vaping experienced improvement over several years.

These data represent long-term e-cigarette use. Chronic consequences will become obvious in the coming years.

Tips for better sleep when you have insomnia

STAR HEALTH DESK

Sleep gives us day-to-day energy. So, a good night's sleep is best. Tips for a good night's sleep are:

Power down: A cell phone, tablet, or digital clock on your nightstand may disrupt sleep. Turn off blue-light sources an hour before bed.

Nix naps: Boost afternoon energy with a walk, ice water, or a phone call with a friend.

Block your clock: Put your alarm clock in a drawer, under your bed, or turn it away from view.

Try a leg pillow for back pain: Mild lower back pain can disrupt deep, restful sleep. Put a pillow between your legs to align your hips and relieve back strain.

Put your neck in 'neutral': Pillows cause stiff necks and tired mornings. It should be the right size, not too fat and not too flat, to support your neck and back. Before bed, maintain good posture.

Seal your mattress: Mattresses, box springs, and pillows can be sealed. Plastic, dust proof covers prevent bed bugs from entering your mattress.

Set Your body clock: After waking up, spend 5 to 30 minutes in bright light. Light motivates the body.

Look for hidden caffeine: Most people enjoy morning coffee. Avoid caffeine after noon. Small amounts of chocolate can affect sleep. Labels. Some pain relievers and diet pills contain caffeine.

Work out wisely: Exercising improves sleep. Before

bed, try yoga or tai chi.

Eat right at night: Avoid eating late. They overload digestion. Before bed, finish eating.

Rethink your drink: Beware of alcohol at bedtime. After its initial effects wear off, you will wake up more often. Warm milk and chamomile tea are best in this regard.

Watch what time you sip: Do not drink in the last 2 hours before bed to avoid bathroom breaks. Keep a nightlight in the bathroom to minimise bright light.

Lower the lights: Dim the lights to make your brain produce melatonin, the sleep hormone. If you read in bed, use a 15-watt bulb.

Hush noise: Try earplugs to avoid noises.

Turn down tobacco: Nicotine is a stimulant, just like caffeine and make insomnia worse. Ask your doctor for help.

Free your mind: Set aside work, touchy discussions, and complicated decisions 2 to 3 hours before bed. Before bed, read a calming book, meditate, or take a warm bath.

Avoid sleeping pills: Some sleep medications are habit-forming and have side effects. Pills should be a short-term solution while you make lifestyle changes.

Know when to see your doctor: If your insomnia lasts a month or more, tell them. They can check if a health condition or medicine you take is causing the problem.

We sleep one-third of our lives. Good sleep helps our brain, body, and immune system.

Beat the heat

DR RAMISHA MALIHA

Summer brings dehydration, sunburn, and skin concerns. So, during this season, drink plenty of water. Here are some ways to stay cool and hydrated.

Drink plenty of water: We all know water is necessary, yet we forget to drink enough of it. Always drink three to four litres of water a day. Do not wait to drink water until your throat is parched; sip frequently. If you are exercising strenuously, chew gum so the saliva hydrates and take water breaks often.

Electrolytes are important: If you exercise, stroll, or work hard, you need electrolytes. Food and beverages have electrolytes. For example, bananas and coconut water have electrolytes and potassium. Glucose and ORS (Oral Rehydration Formula) solutions are also good sources of electrolytes.

Eat fruits and vegetables: Fruits and vegetables are hydrating and include electrolytes. Watermelons, berries, leafy green vegetables, cucumbers, etc., are all alternatives. Carry a few fruits when you are out.

Wear breathable fabric: Tight and dark clothes irritate and do not let your sweat evaporate during summer. Hence, it is advisable to wear fabrics that are breathable, loose-fitted, and easy to wear, like cotton clothes. This summer, do not let summer heat strike you down with heatstroke and dehydration. Instead, follow these tips to battle the heat and prevent dehydration at home.



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