

Menopause and gynecological conditions:

Urinary tract infections

Women have a 53% lifetime risk of experiencing urinary tract infections (UTIs) (for men it is 14%). Gram-negative microorganisms from the gastrointestinal system are usually the causative agents.

Classification

- **Uncomplicated UTI:** infection confined to the bladder in afebrile women
- **Complicated UTI:** infection beyond the bladder in febrile women

Symptoms

- Dysuria
- Urgency
- Frequency
- Suprapubic pain

Investigations

- Urine dipstick for nitrites, leukocytes and red blood cells
- Urine culture and sensitivity
- Imaging – ultrasound, computed tomography (CT)
- Cystoscopy, if necessary

There is a lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of ospemifene or prasterone. Cranberry products and methenamine hippurate may help prevent UTIs.

In the management of UTIs, it is important to ensure adequate fluid intake, to avoid dehydration.

Treatment

- **Antibiotics**, such as nitrofurantoin, sulfamethoxazole/trimethoprim, pivmecillinam, fosfomycin, flouro-quinolones, amoxicillin/clavulanic acid, cephalosporins
- **Analgesics** for pain relief

Prevention

Any or all of the following may be useful for prevention:

- Topical (vaginal) low-dose estrogen (which can also be taken concurrently with systemic menopausal hormone therapy)
- Water-based lubricants during sexual intercourse
- D-mannose
- Antibiotic prophylaxis

Further information

Infectious Diseases Society of America (2025). Practice guideline. Complicated urinary tract infections: clinical guidelines for treatment and management <https://www.idsociety.org/practice-guideline/complicated-urinary-tract-infections>

AUA/SUFU/AUGS (2025). Guideline. Genitourinary syndrome of menopause <https://www.auajournals.org/doi/10.1097/JU.0000000000004589>

AUA/CUA/SUFU (2025). Updates to recurrent uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women <https://www.auajournals.org/doi/10.1097/JU.0000000000004723>

NICE (2024). Guideline NG112. Urinary tract infection (recurrent): antimicrobial prescribing (2024) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng112>