

## How to avoid a UTI this summer

Getting a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) at any time of the year is bad enough. In fact, it's estimated that around half of all women in the UK will suffer at least one UTI at some point in their lives.<sup>1</sup>

But, did you know that the summer months can actually increase your risk of getting a UTI?

Put simply when the weather is warmer, it's easier for germs and bacteria to grow, which upon entering the urethra, can lead to a UTI. Rather than letting a UTI ruin your summer fun, Superdrug's Pharmacy Superintendent Niamh McMillan has essential advice and information to help avoid UTIs, spot the symptoms of UTIs and how to test and treat them.

Niamh McMillan comments "There are many factors that can increase your risk of getting a UTI so I've provided some simple tips and advice for prevention. If you notice any symptoms and think you are suffering from a UTI, or your symptoms are not improving, please seek professional advice from a pharmacist or healthcare professional."

### Stay hydrated

In the warmer summer months people are more prone to dehydration, which can lead to many health problems, including a UTI.

Even mild dehydration can lead to reduced urine output, which means that any bacteria present in the urethra is not being flushed out quick enough.

Try to drink as much water as possible during the hotter temperatures. This will help replenish the lost fluid from sweat and also help filter out bacteria through urination. Water can also help dilute bacteria, making it harder for the bacteria to concentrate and lead to an infection.

### Keep your cool

Bacteria thrives in hotter temperatures therefore the warmer weather can encourage bacterial growth. This doesn't mean you have to hide away from the sun, but it is a good idea to find shade during the hottest parts of the day and not partake in any strenuous activities that will make you too hot.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bsac.org.uk/utis-what-are-the-burning-issues/>

Also think about your clothing. Wearing synthetic and tight fitting underwear can increase your risk of getting a UTI. This is because the material traps moisture and allows bacteria to multiply. Try opting for more breathable fabrics such as cotton, which can wick away moisture.

### **Change out of wet clothes**

Wet swimsuits provide a perfect breeding ground for bacteria. Whilst lounging around in a wet swimsuit won't directly lead to a UTI, it can increase your chances of getting one. At this time of year, people will undoubtedly be heading to pools and the beach. Minimise the risk by drying off and changing into dry clothes, as soon as you can, to help keep the risk of UTIs at bay.

### **Safe sex**

More sexual activity tends to happen in the summer. With that comes an increased risk of UTIs, as intercourse can help bacteria get into the urinary tract. Try urinating straight after sex to help flush out the bacteria and prevent it from building up.

### **Symptoms of a UTI**

Lower tract UTIs affect the urethra and bladder, if you're experiencing any symptoms below talk to a healthcare professional or pharmacist who will be able to provide advice.

Symptoms include:

- Burning with urination
- Increased frequency of urination without passing much urine
- Increased urgency of urination
- Blood in urine
- Cloudy urine
- Dark coloured urine
- Urine that has a strong odour
- Pelvic pain in women

### **Treatment for a UTI**

Firstly, to test whether you have a UTI, Superdrug's [TestCard UTI Test](#), £12.99, offers an at home test kit which provides a quick, accurate and reliable way to test yourself within seconds using your mobile phone. Superdrug also offers a UTI treatment service that aims to treat symptoms within 3 days.

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For further information, expert comments or imager please contact  
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