



## PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUTS

### Bladder infection (cystitis)

#### Bladder infection (cystitis)

Bladder infection (cystitis) is the most common infection of the lower urinary tract. Bladder infection is usually caused by bacteria that get into the bladder by traveling up the urethra.

Bladder infections are more common in women than in men.

Symptoms of a bladder infection can range from mild to severe, and may include:

- Burning pain with urination (dysuria).
- The frequent need to urinate without being able to pass much urine (frequency).
- Blood in the urine (hematuria).

Symptoms of a bladder infection in children depend on the age of the child. A very young child may cry when urinating or may vomit due to the bladder infection. It may be hard to know if the symptoms are a result of urinary problems or another cause.

If untreated, bladder infections can lead to more serious kidney infections that cause fever and lower back (flank) pain, and may damage the kidneys. Bladder infections are treated with antibiotics.

---

Author: Jeannette Curtis  
Caroline Rea, RN, BS, MS

Last Updated: May 25, 2007

Medical Review: Patrice Burgess, MD - Family Medicine  
Adam Husney, MD - Family Medicine  
Kathleen Romito, MD - Family Medicine

---

Reviewed 9 June 2008