

# Hope & Healing

## Cystitis Curing Bladder Infection

A heart at peace gives life to the body — Proverbs 14:30

### Introduction \_\_\_\_\_

Each day your kidneys produce 1½ to 2 quarts of urine. The urine travels from the kidneys down two narrow tubes, the ureters, into the bladder for storage. In an adult, the bladder holds 10 to 20 ounces of urine (a little more than will fill a soft drink can).

When the bladder is about half full, you will usually feel the urge to urinate. Urine is carried out of the body through the urethra, a tube at the bottom of the bladder. The opening of the urethra is at the end of the penis in men, and in front of the vagina in women.

Urination is something you take for granted until you begin to experience problems with it. These problems may include burning when you urinate, and a feel that you have to “go,” just after you have “gone.” And your back may ache. These symptoms suggest that you have a bladder infection (cystitis).

### The Cause of Cystitis \_\_\_\_\_

Normal urine is free of germs. Cystitis may be caused by several germ types, including chlamydia and mycoplasma, but the most common cause is the E. Coli germ, which normally lives in the large intestine without causing any trouble. The problems begin when the E. Coli germs find their way from the large intestine into the urethra, the 1½ inch tube through which urine flows from the bladder. The E. Coli germs gain a foothold and cause urethritis, an infection in the urethra. Then a few E. Coli germs migrate to the bladder and begin another colony.

A common cause of cystitis is a sudden increase in sexual activity, as on

a honeymoon. The theory is that intercourse pushes germs from outside the urethra, into the urethra and up the urethra to the bladder.

### Symptoms of Cystitis \_\_\_\_\_

The symptoms of cystitis are easy to recognize in younger women, and more difficult to diagnose in older women and children. They include:

- The urgent need to urinate often.
- Sharp stinging during urination, often accompanied by a gnawing pain in the abdomen.
- Occasionally, there will be blood in the urine, or it will have a cloudy look and a bad odor.
- Feeling that the bladder is full, even though you just urinated.
- Older women may feel tired, washed out, or shaky, without the bladder symptoms.
- Children may run a fever without urinary symptoms, or they may cry when urinating, because of the pain.

### Making the Diagnosis \_\_\_\_\_

In younger women the urgent need to urinate, and the burning on urination are a signal to do two things:

1. Drink more fluids.
2. See your doctor.

If there is blood in your urine, don't delay. Blood may occasionally appear with an attack of cystitis, but it is not common and requires a more thorough evaluation to be certain that no other problem has caused it.

In the doctor's office, simple cystitis

can be diagnosed by a dipstick test for infection, and by a look at a few drops of urine under the microscope to search for germs and pus cells. In younger women, cultures are not usually required. In older women and children they usually are required in order to choose the drug most likely to provide the most effective treatment.

Bladder infections in men are almost always caused by an infected or enlarged prostate gland. And they always require the help of your doctor to determine the cause as well as to prescribe the cure.

### Curing Cystitis \_\_\_\_\_

When symptoms of a bladder infection begin:

- Drink a lot of liquids. Fluids can be increased to a maximum of one to two gallons within the first 24 hours. Germs can literally be flushed from the bladder during the passage of increased urine.
- Drink fruit juices. The acid in fruit juices may help bring relief. So, include cranberry juice to rid your body of the infection. It can't hurt and it may help.
- There are several classes of antibiotics that are effective in curing bladder infections. It is best to treat the infection while it is localized to the bladder rather than wait and give the germs a chance to spread to one or both kidneys.

- Kidney infections produce chills, fever, back pain, and nausea with vomiting. If not treated promptly, the germs may spread to the blood stream and threaten life itself. Kidney infections may require treatment in the hospital.
- In simple cystitis, antibiotics will be prescribed for 3 to 10 days and are expected to cause the relief of symptoms within a day or so. It is important that the total prescription be taken even if all symptoms are relieved before the pills run out. This gives a better chance to prevent the infection returning. During the days of treatment be sure to drink fluids often to gain the advantage of flushing germs from the bladder.

### Who Will Need Further Tests After the Infection is Gone? \_\_\_\_\_

Women who have one bladder infection after another, or those who have attacks of cystitis that fail to clear with antibiotics will require evaluation through x-rays of the kidneys, or through cystoscope examination of the bladder by looking at the bladder lining through a lighted tube inserted in the urethra by a urologist. Others who may need these type tests include:

- young children with cystitis.
- men — cystitis is very unusual in men.
- patients who had fever or blood in the urine during the attack of cystitis.

### Preventing Cystitis \_\_\_\_\_

Women of all ages, from little girls to those quite elderly, get cystitis. Following are steps you can take to reduce your chances of getting a bladder infection.

- After a bowel movement, wipe from front to back to prevent pulling E. Coli germs from the bowel towards the urethra.
- No matter how busy you are don't ignore the urge to urinate. Holding your urine makes an infection easier

to get.

- Wear loose clothing and cotton underwear. Tight clothes seal off the urethral area and allow germs to grow.
- If you are pregnant, ask your obstetrician about special precautions to prevent bladder infections.
- Drink lots of non-alcoholic, caffeine-free liquids.
- Wash the genital area before and after intercourse and urinate before and after intercourse.
- If you have frequent attacks of cystitis, ask your doctor about preventative antibiotics.

### For Men Only

Infection of the prostate gland may cause symptoms similar to those of a bladder infection. Difficulty in starting urination, dribbling, or decreased force of the urine stream may also be present in older men when the prostate is enlarged.

In younger men, burning during urination is more likely to be due to an infection such as gonorrhea or chlamydia. A man at any age who has these symptoms should see his doctor immediately and refrain from sexual activity.

### Summary \_\_\_\_\_

Cystitis is a problem that preventative measures can do a lot to control. Sometimes, though, nothing seems to work. In such instances, a complete evaluation is required. It may not be cystitis at all and tests will be required to determine its true nature.

## Awaken the Miracles Within You

### The Miracle of Divine Wisdom

Remember those times you had a sudden flash of insight that set you on the right path? Intuition we call it.

Or was it a 3:00 a.m. wake-up call by a problem boring into your brain?

Intuition, a still small voice, sudden insight, imagination. All these are ways we enlarge our options when solving problems. The Holy Spirit is the source of divine wisdom: Don't cross bridges before you come to them. Don't use a hundred units of energy to do 5 units of work. Don't become disengaged by attention to trifles. Keep your personal business personal. Don't waste time in meaningless socialization.

Understand that your perception of things is your reality. This is where you live.

*The recommendations and information in this handout are appropriate in most cases. However, for specific information concerning your personal medical condition, please, consult your doctor.*