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Cystitis Symptoms, Causes and How You Can Avoid Them by [Maria Bantellis](#)

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Cystitis, is an inflammation of the bladder caused by irritation or infection (a urinary tract infection or UTI).

With approximately four out of five women experiencing cystitis at least once in their lifetime, you are not alone – if you have any questions, your pharmacist or GP will be able to help.

Cystitis Symptoms

The most commonly experienced symptoms may include:

– Burning or stinging sensations when you pass urine

– A frequent urge to urinate

– Feeling that you can't fully empty your bladder

The more severe symptoms of cystitis can include high temperature, fever and weakness, blood in urine or even abdominal pain or backache.

If you are suffering severe symptoms or are suffering cystitis recurrently, you should contact your GP for advice as soon as possible.

Causes of Cystitis

There are a number of reasons why you may suffer from cystitis with certain things either causing or aggravating your symptoms.

It can be a case of trial and error when it comes to working out what's triggering it for you, so consider the following when trying to treat and avoid an attack:

Hormonal changes

Hormonal changes can make you susceptible to cystitis; if, for example, you're going through the menopause, your oestrogen levels could drop causing irritation in the urethra. In this case, you may want to speak with your GP for further advice.

Not enough water

Not consuming enough water can be a trigger for cystitis – and you should most certainly drink more if you are experiencing a bout.

To flush out your bladder frequently, you need to drink lots of water, that is between 1.5 to 2 liters per day. You can easily spot if you are dehydrated as healthy, hydrated urine is the colour of straw and anything darker means you need to drink more fluids.

Personal Hygiene

Poor toilet hygiene such as wiping from back to front can also be a trigger for cystitis.

In some cases, women also wash their genitals too often, causing more harm than good. In general, over-cleaning "down there"™ may alter the normal balance of mucus which include protective bacteria as well as scented soaps and bubble baths which can be an irritant. To follow up, washing gently, once a day is sufficient.

Underwear

The importance of wearing cotton underwear and changing it daily is very high. Synthetic clothing prevents our bodies from breathing and they help to create warm, moist, airless conditions, specifically those around your genitals. These are a breeding ground for bad bacteria.

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