

# Kidney — AND — Bladder Health

Conditions, Causes, Symptoms and Treatments



# Kidney and Bladder Health

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## Disclaimer

***We hope you enjoy reading this publication, however, we do suggest you read our disclaimer.***

All the material written in this document is provided for informational purposes only and is general in nature.

Every person is a unique individual and what has worked for some, or even many, may not work for you. Any information perceived as advice must be considered in light of your own particular set of circumstances.

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Every attempt has been made to provide well-researched and up-to-date content at the time of writing. Now all the legalities have been taken care of, please enjoy the content.

## Introduction

Our urinary system is one of those incredible parts of our body that we give little thought to, until it doesn't work as it should, or we expect it to.

As with most of our biology, the 'interface' that we are consciously aware of is truly just the tip of the iceberg. An unbelievable amount of work is carried on silently and automatically by our kidneys and bladder, and all the associated vessels and tissue.

At least, that is the case while they remain in good health. However, when any part ceases to perform optimally, the effects can be profound, and even deadly.

Due to its complexity, there are a large range of conditions that can affect the urinary system and its various components.

Causes vary, from congenital and heredity factors, through to lifestyle factors, which are those over which the individual had or has some influence.

Symptoms cover a large range also, from embarrassing and inconveniencing through to dangerous and even fatal.

Many who suffer from distress caused by any condition related to their urinary system can take some reassurance in knowing just how widespread they are.

For anyone who has concerns in this area, this eBook provides detailed understanding of the conditions most likely to be affecting them, as well as explaining the causes, symptoms and treatments.

## Urinary Incontinence and Bladder Weakness

Urinary incontinence is an uncomfortable and embarrassing condition that has affected the lives of many people. Whether it's a minor issue or a major one, it has a negative effect on the lives of those who suffer from it.



The primary symptom of urinary incontinence is the unintentional leakage of urine, which can be either in small or large amounts. You may leak urine when you sneeze, laugh, cough, or exercise. Some people have difficulty holding their bladder at any time and may urinate excessively when trying to reach the bathroom.

## What Is Urinary Incontinence?

Your urinary system gets rid of waste products from your body by creating and expelling urine. When your kidneys, ureters, bladder, and urethra all work together seamlessly, you still have time to go to the bathroom to urinate. But when they don't, it could lead to a condition called urinary incontinence.

Contrary to the common notion, the loss of bladder control is not a normal or an inevitable part of aging. Although it's true that older people are more at risk, other factors should be considered aside from age, because not every aged person is affected.

## What Are The Causes Of Urinary Incontinence?

Bladder weakness or the loss of bladder control can happen due to several things. If you are a sufferer, you will need to see a doctor to determine the reason behind your urinary incontinence.

However, the most common contributing causes are the following:

- Certain foods, drinks, and drugs act as diuretics, which could lead to frequent urination and sometimes incontinence.
- Medical conditions, such as urinary tract infection or constipation.
- Hormonal changes due to pregnancy can trigger stress incontinence.
- Menopause.
- Physical changes after childbirth.
- Enlargement of the prostate gland.
- Hysterectomy.
- Prostate cancer.
- Neurological disorder.

## What Are The Risk Factors For Developing Urinary Incontinence?

- **Gender.** Both men and women may suffer from urinary incontinence. But women have a higher risk because of their physical anatomy, hormonal changes, and physical changes during pregnancy and after childbirth.

- **Age.** Older people are more at risk because muscles weaken as they age and that includes the urethra and the bladder.
- **Excess Weight.** Extra pressure is placed on the muscles of the urinary system, which could lead to bladder weakness.
- **Genetics.** A family history of urinary incontinence can increase your risk of developing this condition.
- **Diabetes.** Excess sugar can make you urinate more.
- **Neurological Conditions.** They can interrupt nerve signals that are important to bladder control.

## What Are The Different Types Of Urinary Incontinence?

- **Stress Incontinence**

Stress incontinence occurs when any physical activity exerts pressure on your bladder and leads to the unintentional leaking of urine. This type of incontinence happens when the urethral sphincter or the floor muscles in your pelvis can no longer hold in urine due to weakening or damage.

- **Urge Incontinence**

Urge incontinence is characterized by an overactive bladder, which means you have the urge to urinate even if your bladder is not yet full. This condition is triggered by detrusor overactivity or when the detrusor, also known as the bladder muscle, contracts and sends signals to your brain that you need to urinate.

- **Mixed Incontinence**

Mixed incontinence means you have both stress and urge incontinence. It's common among women but can also happen among men, especially those who have had their prostate gland removed.

- **Overflow Incontinence**

With overflow incontinence, you may or may not feel any urge to urinate. Your bladder doesn't empty completely because of an underactive bladder muscle or enlargement of the prostate gland, which blocks the proper flow of urine from the bladder. Men are more predisposed to overflow incontinence because it's often tied to prostate-related concerns.

- **Functional Incontinence**

Functional incontinence means you have a fully functional urinary system, but you also have an illness or disease that's preventing you from controlling your bladder. This condition is common among people with dementia or mental illness. Medications that also act as a diuretic can lead to nocturnal incontinence.

- **Reflex Incontinence**

Reflex incontinence is common among people who have suffered spinal cord injuries or are afflicted with neurological problems due to multiple sclerosis. In this condition, the nerves that send signals to your brain that your bladder is full have been damaged. Because of this, you won't feel any urge or warning when your bladder contracts and urine leaks.

By knowing what urinary incontinence is, as well as its causes, risk factors, and types, you'll understand the condition better. Consult a doctor right away if you or your loved one is suffering from this condition.

You may feel uncomfortable discussing this problem but seeking medical advice will help you address the problem as effectively as possible.

## Overactive Bladder at Night (Nocturia)



Do you have to wake up several times at night to relieve yourself?

Is it affecting the quality of your sleep and your health in general?

You may have nocturia.

Understanding its symptoms, causes, and treatment is the first step to improving your condition.

## What Is Nocturia?

Nocturia is characterized by making at least two trips to the bathroom in the evening to urinate. This condition affects millions of Americans and is one of the many reasons behind poor sleep quality.

It can affect both men and women, young and old. But according to a study published in The National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), 76% of women and 60% of men who are at least 40 years old wake up more than once in the evening to urinate.

Although older people are at a higher risk of suffering from nocturia, it shouldn't be considered as a condition that you can't prevent. There are things you can do to cut down the number of your trips to the bathroom and sleep better at night.

## What Are The Causes Of Nocturia?

The causes of nocturia range from poor lifestyle choices to hormonal changes to health problems. The most common causes are the following:

- Drinking too much before sleeping.
- Training yourself to wake up several times in the evening to urinate.
- Taking medications that induce frequent urination, such as diuretics and cardiac glycosides.
- Diabetes.
- Bladder obstructions or infections.
- Pregnancy.
- Menopause.
- Prostatic hyperplasia.
- Congestive heart failure.
- Kidney disease or kidney failure.

## What Are The Types Of Nocturia?

1. **Polyuria** – This is a condition where you urinate more than 3,000 mL per day. It's commonly due to drinking excessive amounts of fluid. This can

be due to certain medical conditions, such as untreated Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes.

2. **Nocturnal Polyuria** – With this type, frequent urination only happens at night. Individuals who have congestive heart failure, edema of the lower extremities, or a high-sodium diet are predisposed to experiencing this condition.
3. **Nocturnal Urinary Frequency** – This condition occurs when you urinate frequently but in small amounts. There's no increase in the urine volume your body produces, but your bladder doesn't empty completely each time.

### **What Are The Effects Of Nocturia?**

Nocturia is not only a nuisance but can also create significant health problems when not addressed promptly. The likely impacts of nocturia on your sleep quality and overall health can be -

- Reduced and low-quality sleep at night.
- Persistent drowsiness during the day.
- Impaired mental and physical function.
- Higher risks of accidents, such as falls and fractures.
- Irritability and depression in worse cases.

### **What Are The Treatment Options For Nocturia?**

When you visit your doctor, you'll undergo a thorough physical examination, urinalysis, and urine culture. In some cases, you'll be asked to come in for a bladder scan, cystoscopy, or urodynamic testing.

Your doctor will ask you questions to help determine the underlying cause of the condition. The questions cover the following -

- When the symptoms start to appear.
- If you produce small or large amounts of urine.
- How many times you urinate every night.
- If you notice any changes in the volume of your urine.

- How much coffee or alcoholic you drink every day.
- Any recent changes to your diet.
- Whether you get enough sleep at night.

The treatment provided will depend on what's deemed to be the underlying cause of your medical condition. The medications most often prescribed include -

- Anticholinergic drugs – to treat bladder muscle issues.
- Desmopressin – to help the kidneys produce less urine.
- Diuretic medicines – to regulate the production of urine.

You will be advised to make some behavioral changes to treat nocturia, such as the following:

- Limit the volume of fluids you take at night, especially before bed.
- Limit, if not totally avoid, drinking caffeine and alcohol in the evening.
- Take afternoon naps because it helps your body absorb fluid into your bloodstream.
- Elevate your legs so that fluid can be distributed back into your bloodstream, so you minimize your trips to the bathroom.

### **Take Action**

Nocturia can be a debilitating condition if not treated correctly and quickly. It affects not only your sleep but also your physical and mental health.

Seek professional medical help if you notice signs of nocturia. Your doctor will determine the underlying cause of your condition and create a treatment plan that's suitable for your situation.

## Natural Ways to Flush Kidneys and Bladder

The kidneys and bladder have a vital role in eliminating waste and toxins from the body. When they're not functioning well, your whole body will suffer. As such, it's crucial to keep them healthy.



### How To Cleanse The Kidneys And Bladder Naturally

Kidneys filter and process fluid in the body - about 200 liters every day. They have a million filtering units called nephrons.

Once the kidney filters the excess fluid and other toxins, the waste will form as urine. The urine will pass through the ureter and store in the bladder for about 1-8 hours before urination.

Cleansing is one way to help the kidneys and the bladder to function properly and to keep them healthy. With cleansing, you can reduce and avoid the risk of infection. Here are natural ways to help your kidney and bladder health.

### **Drink Plenty of Fluids, Especially Water**

The body needs water all the time, and one of its main purposes is to help the kidneys and the bladder flush out toxins from the body. It is recommended to take at least eight glasses of water each day.

Here are the best times of the day to drink water -

- Soon after waking up
- Before meals
- Before and after a workout
- Before taking a bath
- Before bedtime

Water also helps regulate body temperature and facilitates nutrient absorption, and it reduces the risk of conditions such as kidney stones, migraines, headaches, and infections. It can help prevent constipation and help with weight loss too.

However, there are some cases when you need to drink less water, such as when you have kidney failure or heart disease.

### **Herbal Teas, Juices, and Probiotics**

Teas, juices, and probiotics contain Vitamin C that can boost the immune system and help flush out toxins in the body. Probiotics help the body fight unwanted microorganisms, such as yeast, fungus, and other infections.

Here are some fruits and herbal teas that can help cleanse the kidneys –

- Lemon
- Cranberry
- Apple
- Pomegranate
- Watermelon
- Coconut Water
- Sambong leaves
- Stinging nettle
- Hydrangea

### **Eat A Healthy, Balanced Diet**

A well-balanced diet is important to help all the body's organs work effectively. Eating healthy foods is the keystone of overall health. It ensures that you get the necessary vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients the body needs.

Make sure that your diet contains the following:

- Fresh vegetables
- Fresh fruits
- Whole grains
- Legumes
- Lean proteins

### **Urinate Regularly**

Make sure that you urinate regularly and you don't try to excessively hold it. Otherwise, it can result in infections, such as urinary tract infection, which is common among women.

If you overly prevent the urine from coming out, it's possible for some urine to flow back into the bladder, along with bacteria that can cause infection.

## **Keep The Genital Area Clean**

Cleaning the genital area properly helps prevent infections. Proper hygiene will help prevent bacteria from harming your urinary system.

However, treat this area gently as excessive or improper cleaning can provide a breeding ground for infectious organisms.

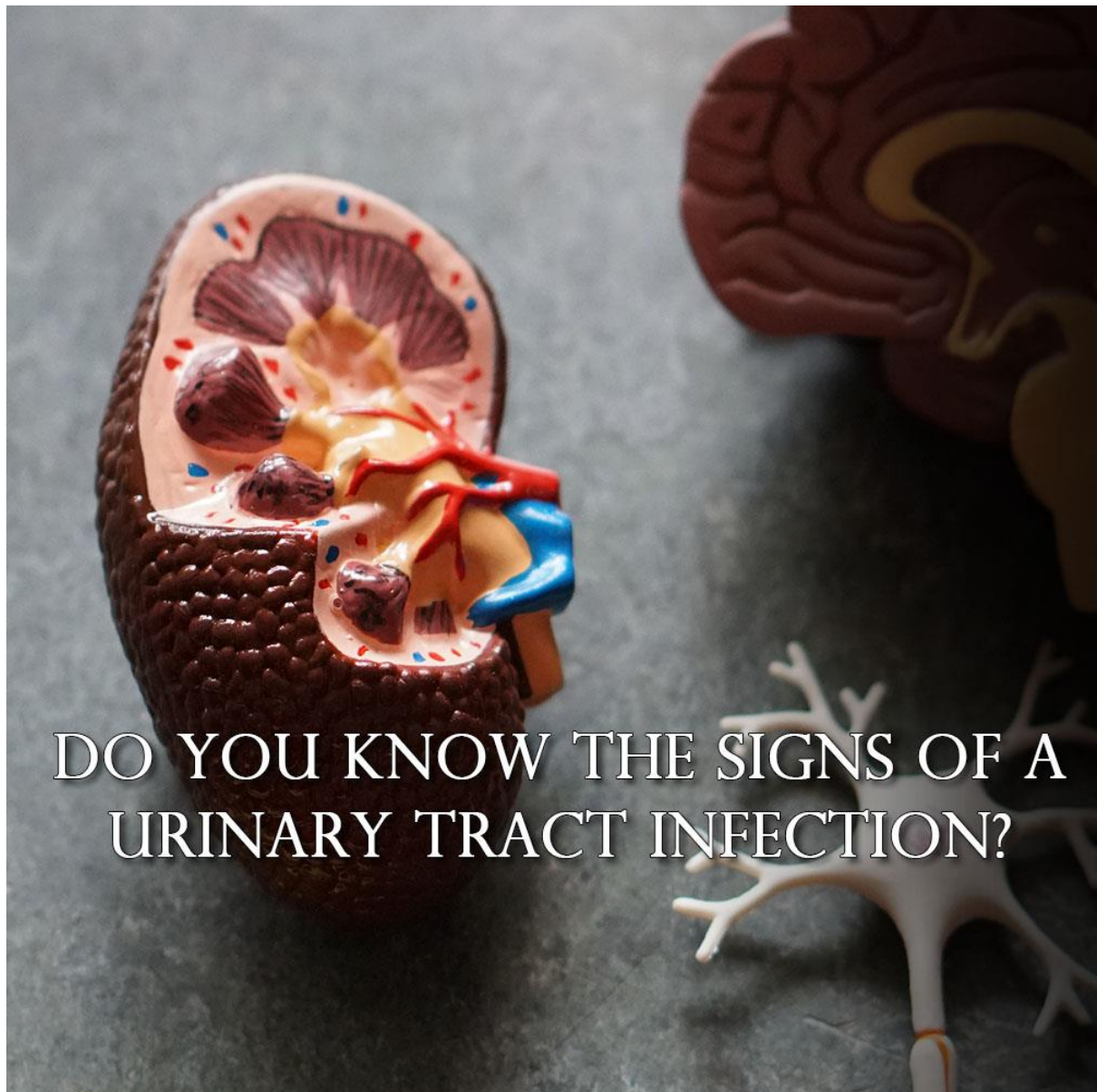
- Use warm water when washing when possible
- Wear comfortable, non-irritating underwear
- Use unscented or mild soap
- Rinse thoroughly and pat dry

It's essential to keep the kidneys and the bladder healthy, and using the above suggestions can help remove toxins from the body naturally. You may see detox plans using cleansing products, but be wary of them.

Consult a health professional first if you're considering any harsh ingredients.

Most people keep their kidneys and bladder healthy simply by eating a healthy, balanced diet and drinking water regularly.

## Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) - Symptoms and Causes



- Do you have the urge to urinate more often than usual?
- Do you only release a few drops when you do?
- Do you feel a burning sensation or severe pain when you go?

These could be symptoms of a urinary tract infection (UTI).

This is a bacterial infection that affects your urinary tract. The contamination occurs when bacteria, mostly E.coli, get into the urinary tract.

Urinary tract infections may cause the following conditions -

- Urethritis – infection of the urethra
- Cystitis – infection of the bladder
- Pyelonephritis – infection of the kidneys
- Abscess – a buildup of pus in your urinary tract

The American Urological Association reported that more than 8 million visits to doctors every year is about a UTI. It can affect both men and women, but women are much more at risk of getting the infection at least once.

### **UTI Symptoms**

You likely have a UTI if you experience a cluster of the following -

- Pain in the lower abdomen pelvic area that may radiate to the lower back
- Frequent urination
- Pain or burning sensation when passing urine
- Only a few drops of urine come out even when there's a strong urge to urinate
- Urine has a foul odor and looks cloudy
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fever

### **UTI Causes and Risk Factors**

Different species of bacteria live in certain parts of your body like your skin, rectum, and vagina. In these regions, these organisms, in naturally-occurring numbers don't cause a problem.

However, there are instances when they reach your urinary tract system, which results in an infection.

There are also other factors that may increase your risk of getting a UTI.

- **Gender** – Women are more likely to get UTI because their urethras are shorter than men. Women also go through hormonal changes. When they reach the menopausal stage, they produce less estrogen, which increases the chances of contracting a UTI.
- **Birth Control** – Women who use contraceptive diaphragms are prone to UTI. Women whose male partners use condoms with spermicidal foam during sexual intercourse are also at higher risk.
- **Urinary Tract Problems** – Anatomic problems involving the urinary tract such as diverticula can increase your chances of getting a UTI. Any blockage that interferes with urination will also increase your chances of getting infected.
- **Weak Immune System** – Immunocompromised individuals, such as those with diabetes, are at higher risk of UTIs because their body is less able to fight off infection.
- **Catheter Use** – People who are confined to the hospital and are using a tube to empty their bladder are at increased risk, too.

### **Visit Your Doctor**

In some instances, mild cases of UTI will go away without medical intervention. However, it's always recommended to contact your health care provider when you notice the symptoms of a UTI.

Your family doctor or clinic can help with the diagnosis and treatment of UTIs. However, if you keep on getting UTIs, they may refer you to a urologist. They may ask you to see a nephrologist if your UTIs develop into kidney infections.

A simple UTI can be treated by taking antibiotics for three days. You should also increase your water intake to help eliminate the bacteria from your body. Avoid drinking alcoholic drinks, soda, and coffee; and use a heating pad to soothe the pain in your lower abdomen.

For complicated UTIs, oral antibiotic treatment may last for up to two weeks. In some cases, intravenous antibiotic therapy may also be administered.

## **UTI Prevention**

Just as there are factors that increase your chances of getting a UTI, there are things you can do to decrease your odds, too.

- Drink plenty of water
- Take vitamin C to boost your immune system – cranberry juice or supplements are an excellent choice
- Urinate right away if you feel the urge
- Females must wipe their genital area from front to back
- Use cotton underwear
- Empty your bladder after sexual intercourse
- Use a different birth control method than diaphragms

Knowing the symptoms and understanding the causes can help lower your risk of contracting a urinary tract infection.

If you notice the signs of a UTI, consult your doctor right away so that you can get the right treatment.

## Cranberries and Urinary Tract Infections



Germs can create health problems, including urinary tract infections. More than 150 million people around the world experience a UTI each year, making it one of the most common bacterial infections.

Taking antibiotics is one of the most effective ways to treat this infection, but it also comes with a higher risk of developing other problems, such as fungal infections.

Other side effects include nausea, vomiting, rash, or diarrhea. Another issue is the efficacy of antibiotics becoming compromised due to resistance from overuse.

Instead of taking medications to treat a mild urinary infection, you can try to prevent or overcome an infection naturally. There is one popular, very effective option - the use of cranberries.

### **Cranberries As A Superfood**

Cranberries contain many nutrients and antioxidants, that's why they're considered a superfood. They contain vitamin C, flavonoids, and organic acids. They contain proanthocyanidins (PACs), which have also been noted as being effective in improving oral health.

Cranberries are rich in polyphenols, which are believed to decrease the risk of cardiovascular diseases. They can also help reduce body mass index and help improve blood sugar levels.

Preclinical studies of cancer cells in test tubes also showed that cranberries have a significant positive effect on cancer cells by slowing down their growth and triggering their death.

### **Are Cranberries Effective for UTI Management?**

Cranberries have proven effective in managing many urinary tract infections. A study conducted by a team of researchers showed that cranberry capsules can lower the risk of contracting a UTI.

However, studies are divided as to the effectiveness of cranberries in treating or preventing UTIs. Other reports say that they don't help much in reducing recurring UTIs, while some point out the inconsistent amounts of active ingredients in cranberry supplements.

## **Cranberry Capsules Vs. Cranberry Juice**

Unfortunately, the typical cranberry juice found on the market won't work as well as you hope in treating UTIs. Experts say that you have to drink a large amount of concentrated cranberry juice to treat UTIs. It may help keep your body hydrated, but it will no longer contain proanthocyanidins once it reaches your bladder.

Cranberry capsules can be a better option. One capsule is equivalent to 8 ounces of cranberry juice, so it's easier to take.

## **Cranberry Isn't For Everyone**

While you may find cranberries to be a convincing treatment for UTIs, you have to consider other factors as well to know if it's right for you. For instance, cranberry is rich in oxalates, and taking it often in high doses can contribute to kidney stones.

You should also avoid taking cranberry products if you're on warfarin medication because it could lead to uncontrolled bleeding. Whether it's a cranberry supplement or increased intake of cranberry juice, it's better to consult your doctor first.

## **Other Natural Methods of Treating UTIs Without Antibiotics**

Besides cranberries, there are other natural steps you can do. The following measures can help prevent or treat UTIs -

- **Drink plenty of water** – Water will dilute urine and help it pass through the urinary tract faster, making it harder for bacteria to breed to levels that constitute an infection.
- **Use probiotics** – Good bacteria, such as lactobacilli, can protect your urinary tract by preventing dangerous bacteria from adhering to urinary tract cells, by producing a strong antibacterial component in your urine and by lowering your urine's pH level.

- **Take vitamin C** – Vitamin C is known to help boost your immune system, lower the pH level of your urine, and form nitrogen oxides to kill bacteria.

### **Is There Any Way To Prevent Urinary Tract Infections?**

Yes, there are ways to help prevent urinary tract infections. Keep these things in mind to keep your urinary system healthy.

- After urinating, make sure to wipe your genitals from front to back and not the other way around.
- Always keep the area between the genitals and anus clean.
- Take a shower instead of bathing in a tub.
- Avoid applying commercial products like powders to your genital area.
- Urinate right away when you feel the urge.

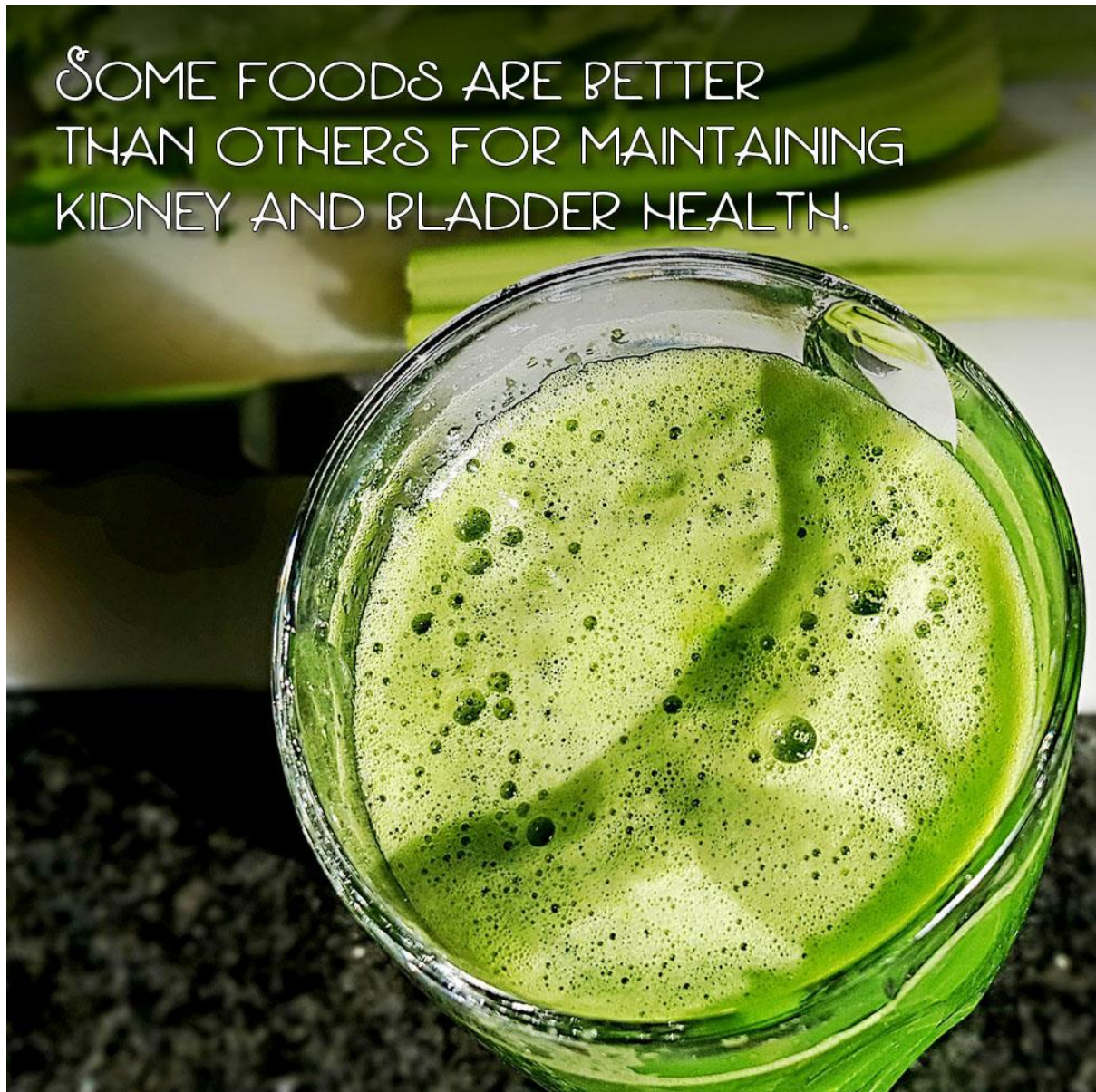
Cranberries are showing positive results as an alternative treatment for urinary tract infections. More studies need to be conducted to further prove its effectiveness.

However, there is compelling anecdotal evidence from many women who take cranberry supplements either as a preventative or when they feel the first signs of a possible UTI.

Before you decide to take cranberry capsules or drink cranberry juice to treat your UTI, it's better to talk to your doctor first to know if it's right for you.

Also, practice habits that keep your urinary system healthy so that you'll have less chance of contracting a UTI.

## Foods For Healthy Kidneys and Bladder



The kidneys and the bladder are responsible for removing waste products and toxins, and excess fluids from the body.

The kidneys also produce hormones that regulate blood pressure levels, while the bladder is the temporary storage receptacle for urine.

Keeping these organs healthy is vital in preventing health problems. In the US alone, around 26 million American adults suffer from serious kidney diseases.

Other kidney and bladder problems that you might encounter are -

- Urinary tract infection
- Kidney stones
- Blood in urine
- Protein in urine
- Bladder control issues
- Chronic kidney diseases

One way – possibly the simplest and most effective way - to help keep the kidneys and the bladder healthy is by eating a healthy diet.

Here are some foods that will help you do just that.

- **Celery**

Celery is rich in vitamin C and other minerals and nutrients that boost the immune system and protect the kidneys and the bladder against infections. It contains antioxidant agents that neutralize toxins in the body.

Celery contains an apigenin compound that is used to fight bacteria, viruses, and inflammation of the body in Chinese medicine.

- **Cauliflower**

Cauliflower contains antioxidants that help reduce inflammation. It's also high in fiber and vitamin K, vitamin C, and folate. Cauliflower helps boost the immune system to protect you against infections. It's good for people with kidney problems who need to avoid starchy foods such as potatoes and rice.

- **Garlic**

Garlic is rich in vitamin C and is used to reduce inflammation. Garlic contains allicin, which is an antibacterial agent that helps fight infection in the urinary system. It can help treat yeast infections by preventing the growth of yeast and promoting good bacteria. It can also help treat enlarged prostates.

- **Sea Bass Fish**

Sea bass is a fatty fish rich in omega-3 and protein. Omega 3 is good for the heart and helps to reduce high blood pressure, which is one of the risk factors for kidney diseases. Omega-3 fatty acids also help prevent some bladder infections.

- **Onions**

Onion is rich in flavonoids that are a powerful antioxidant. It helps fight toxins and inflammation in the body and may also reduce high blood pressure. People with kidney and bladder problems need to reduce sodium intake, and onions (and garlic too) make dishes tasty with little or no salt.

- **Berries**

Berries, such as blueberries, cranberries, raspberries, strawberries, and cherries, are rich in nutrients and antioxidants. Berries help promote the healthy function of the kidneys and the bladder. Berry juices help cleanse and prevent kidney infections, including urinary tract infections.

- **Beans**

Black beans are rich in protein and fiber. They contain antioxidant compounds that help the body fight some diseases and infections. Black beans also help maintain stable blood pressure.

- **Dark Leafy Greens**

Green and leafy vegetables, such as spinach, broccoli, and kale, contain different nutrients and antioxidants. Spinach has inflammatory properties and is a good source of iron, folate, and other essential vitamins. It helps regulate blood pressure and boost the immune system.

Broccoli is rich in fiber that promotes good digestion to prevent urinary incontinence. Kale or leaf cabbage contains vitamin A, C, and vitamin K, and other phytonutrients that can help prevent cancer.

## **Poor Diet Means Poor Health**

Eating the right food can keep the kidneys and the bladder healthy by supplying essential nutrients and preventing damage caused by nutrient deficiencies.

Aside from consuming the foods above, make sure that you stay hydrated. Water is vital for nutrient absorption and waste excretion.

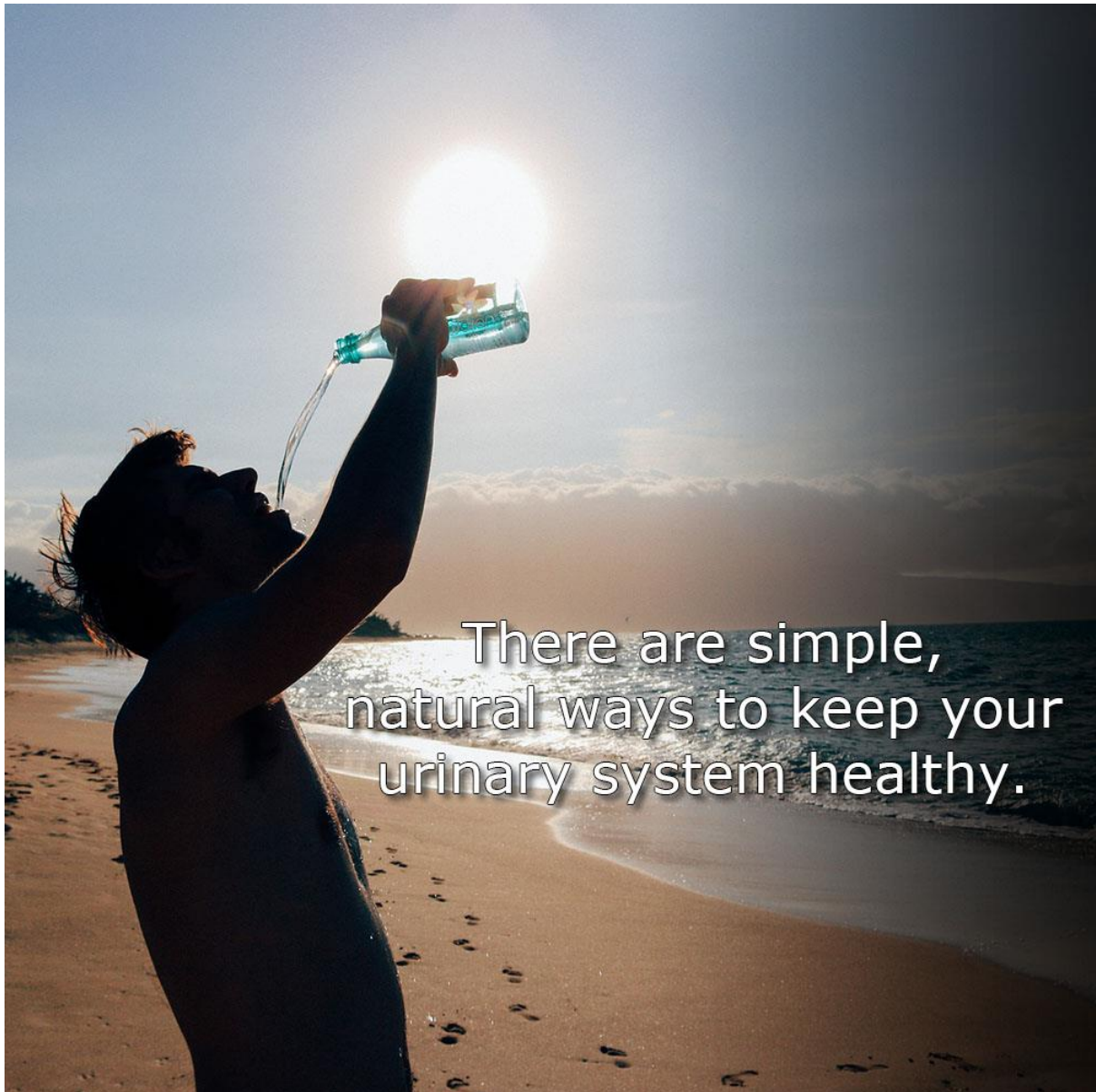
Avoid excessive intake of dairy products, white potatoes, red meat, bananas, canned foods, alcohol, and foods that are high in sodium and phosphorus.

An unhealthy diet can contribute to kidney diseases and bladder infections, which is why you must be mindful of what you eat. If the kidneys and the bladder aren't functioning well, resultant toxins and waste can cause problems to other parts.

If you already have kidney or bladder problems, it's all the more important to selectively choose the foods that you eat.

Consult a nutritionist or your doctor for proper guidance on kidney and bladder-friendly diet plans.

## Natural Ways to Keep Your Urinary System Healthy



There are simple, natural ways to keep your urinary system healthy.

Keeping the bladder, and the urinary system in general, healthy is crucial given their function in removing waste from the body.

The bladder provides a temporary storage of urine, the by-product of your body's metabolism.

It can hold up to 24 ounces of urine.

An unhealthy bladder can lead to urinary tract problems and other health issues. In the United States alone, 57,000 men and 18,000 women have bladder cancer.

Thousands die from this form of cancer each year.

To prevent this from happening, there are measures you can take to help prevent bladder and urinary system-related problems. It doesn't have to involve medicines either. Here are some natural ways to keep your bladder and urinary system healthy.

### **Stay Hydrated**

Drink enough water every day, at least 8 glasses, to help flush out the waste in the body. Drink water before and after exercise to replace the fluid lost by perspiration. Drinking water also helps in the proper digestion and absorption of nutrients in the body.

Water should be the drink of choice and should provide the bulk of consumed fluids. However, if you have serious kidney or heart diseases, you must be careful not to drink too much fluid, and follow medical advice.

Eliminate soda from your diet, and consume whole fruit instead of juice where possible.

### **Reduce Caffeine Intake**

Too much caffeine may inhibit the absorption of minerals and nutrients in the body. Drinking coffee can also cause dehydration, which can increase the risk of bladder infection and urinary tract problems.

It can increase your urge to urinate and also irritate the tissues of the bladder. You should limit your coffee intake to 3 to 4 cups of coffee per day.

## **Reduce Alcohol Consumption**

Alcohol can contribute to urge incontinence and irritate your bladder's lining. It can also increase the acidity of your urine and make a UTI worse. Limit your intake of alcohol, or better yet, stop it altogether.

## **Perform Kegel Exercises**

For women, Kegel exercises or pelvic-floor exercises help in controlling and strengthening pelvic muscles. They improve your ability to stop the leakage of urine. If you perform these exercises, especially if you have urinary incontinence, you can notice an improvement after about three to six weeks.

## **Eat Healthily**

Be mindful of what you eat. Eating a healthy diet protects the body against illnesses and diseases. Foods that are rich in protein, fiber, Vitamin C, and other essential minerals can help boost the immune system and body organs to function effectively.

High-fiber foods can help you prevent constipation, which could otherwise put extra pressure on your bladder. Avoid foods that can irritate the bladder, such as tomatoes, oranges, lemons, and spicy foods.

## **Be Physically Active**

Exercise regularly to avoid constipation and to maintain a healthy weight. When you're overweight, the tissues around your bladder become fatty. This adds pressure on your bladder and weakens your pelvic floor muscles, which can make it more difficult for you to control your urine.

## **Practice Good Bathroom Habits**

Observe proper hygiene. Don't hold your urine for too long and urinate when triggered. Emptying the bladder properly can help prevent bladder infection, so take time when you do urinate. Don't rush to get back to what you are doing. Relax.

Bacteria is one of the factors that can lead to infections, such as a UTI, which is most common in women. After using the toilet, wipe from front to back.

### **Stop Smoking**

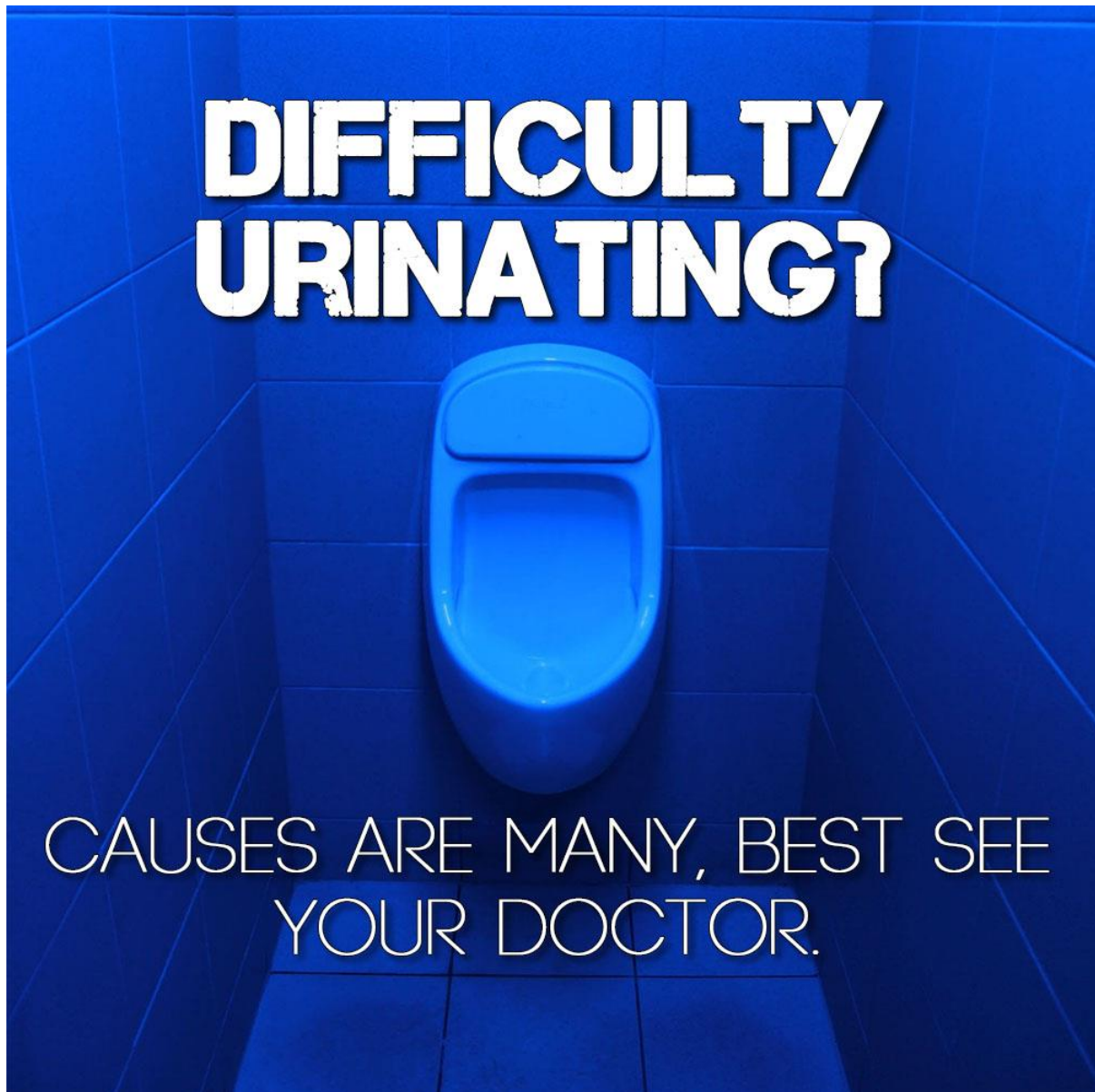
Cigarette smoke contains carcinogens that are bad for health. It not only affects the lungs and the heart but also affects the urinary system. Around 60 to 70 different carcinogens are found in tobacco, and it has toxins that can destroy organs.

Cigarette smoke can also irritate the bladder and make you urinate more often. If smoking is making you cough frequently, it can cause urine leakage.

Those people who have an unhealthy bladder are more likely to have urinary tract infections, overactive bladder issues, and urinary incontinence. Keeping a healthy bladder and urinary tract system is important to prevent these health issues.

In the case of persistent bladder and urinary tract system symptoms, it's important to contact a medical professional promptly for proper diagnosis and treatment options.

## Difficulty Urinating - Causes and Symptoms



Urinating is one of the natural functions of your body and normally you shouldn't have any problems getting the job done.

Unfortunately, sometimes you can't urinate even if you have the urge to do so.

## **The Symptoms**

- Pain while urinating
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fever and chills
- Blood in urine
- Unable to urinate despite the strong urge to go.

When this happens, what's causing the problem?

## **Possible Causes**

When you are having difficulty urinating, you're most likely suffering from a condition that's affecting your urinary tract. The common triggers are -

- **Urinary Incontinence**

Urinary incontinence, which affects both men and women, is a condition wherein you have little or no control over your bladder. It may be due to obesity, weak muscles, or when your brain sends wrong signals to your bladder that you need to urinate, or when your body produces too much urine.

Men with urinary incontinence usually suffer from other contributing medical problems, such as prostate cancer or enlarged prostates.

- **Urinary Tract Infection**

Problems urinating may also be due to a urinary tract infection. This condition can affect any part of your urinary system, but in most cases, it's the lower urinary tract.

- **Prostate Problems**

Men who have problems with their prostate glands, such as inflamed or enlarged prostates, and prostate cancer, usually suffer from difficulty passing urine.

- **Diabetes**

When you have diabetes, your kidneys work double-time to remove the excess sugar in your bloodstream. That's why diabetic patients feel thirsty all the time, and as a result, they drink more water and urinate more frequently.

- **Blockage In The Urinary System**

Any form of blockage in your urinary system may lead to problems when urinating. A kidney stone, heart problems, as well as benign or malignant tumors, can make it hard for you to urinate effectively.

Kidney stones may cause you to urinate more frequently or produce small amounts of urine even if you have a strong urge to urinate. Your urine may look pinkish, brownish, reddish, or cloudy.

- **Fallen Bladder**

The weakening of the wall between the bladder and the vagina may lead to urinary incontinence.

### **Treatment For Difficulty In Urinating**

There are medications used to treat problems in urination. Dutasteride is primarily used to treat benign prostatic hyperplasia but can also help reduce urine retention.

Finasteride treats enlarged prostate, which can block the flow of urine, thereby causing difficulty in urinating. Consult your doctor first before using any over-the-counter medications.

Avoid holding your urine in. Urinate right away whenever you feel the urge and never rush when urinating. You can try applying pressure over your bladder so that you can empty it as much as you can.

You may also apply a hot compress or take a warm shower to aid urination. Don't drink alcoholic beverages or caffeinated drinks before bedtime.

## **When To See A Doctor**

Difficulty urinating is a common problem doctors have to treat. They have to determine whether it is urinary incontinence, a urinary tract infection, prostate problems, or other causes. As you cannot diagnose the cause yourself, it's essential to consult your doctor.

If you notice unusual changes to the flow, amount, and color of your urine, call your doctor. It's all the more important to consult your doctor if you have a fever, chills, and back pain.

Your health care provider will take your medical history and conduct a thorough physical examination to determine the possible cause of the problem.

You may also be asked to undergo certain exams like cystoscopy, bladder scan, urinalysis, urine culture, urethral swab, or cystometrogram.

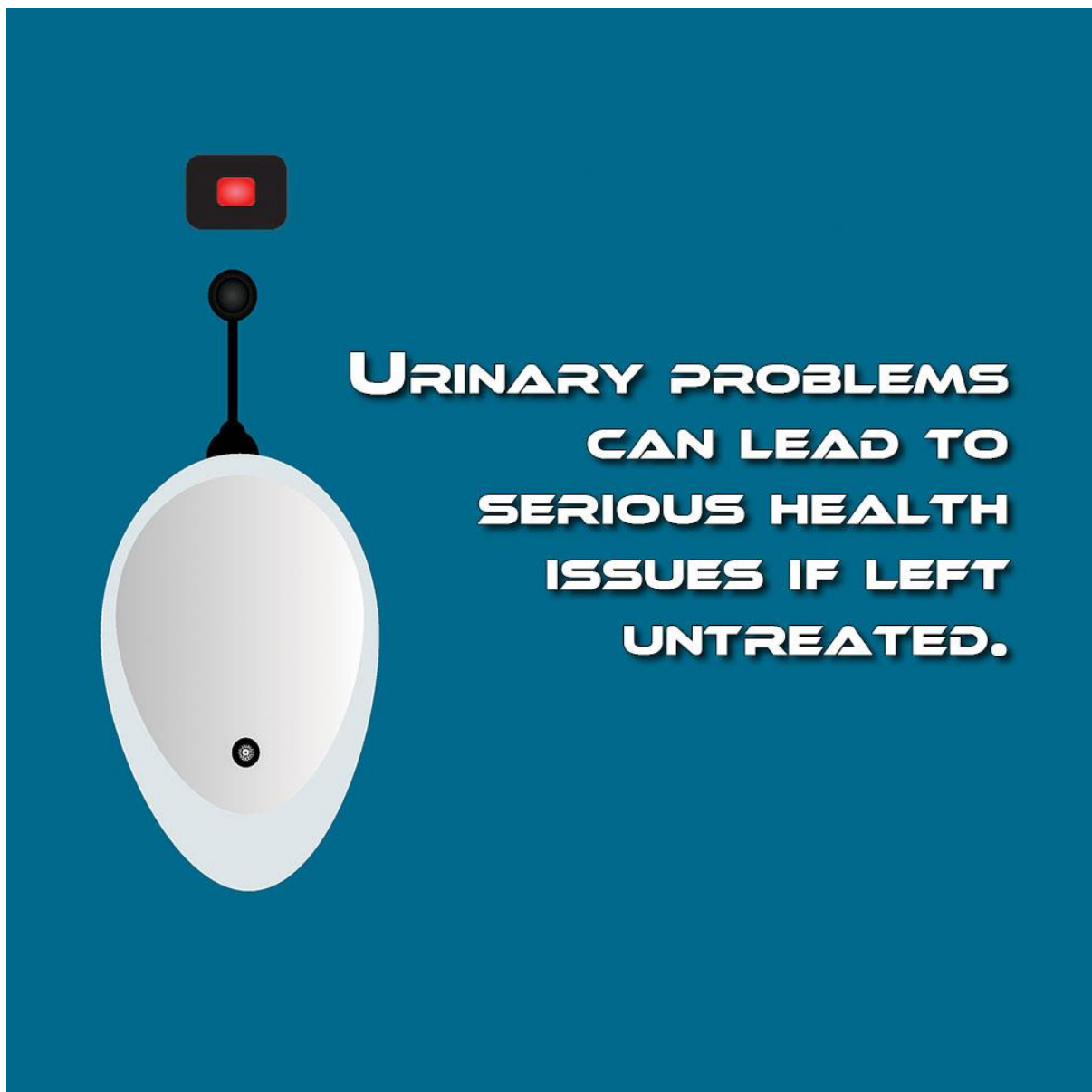
If you find it difficult to urinate for more than 24 hours, call your healthcare professional immediately so that you can get the appropriate treatment.

Passing less than two cups of urine per day is not normal. Although severe dehydration may cause low urine production, it can also be a sign of a complicated health concern.

If you are regularly passing low volumes of urine and you are hydrating adequately, make an appointment to see your doctor because your condition may be due to severe kidney problems.

This applies to both men and women.

## Urinary Problems - Types, Causes, and Symptoms



Just like the other parts of your body, there are conditions that affect your urinary system. Some of these health problems are common among women, others are more specific to men, while a few affects both genders. There are different types of urinary problems, each with its own set of symptoms and causes.

- **Bladder Dysfunction**

This can be characterized by loss of bladder control, incomplete emptying of the bladder, frequent urination, difficulty urinating, weak urine flow, and urine

leaks. Its common causes include bladder irritation, blockage in the urethra, and nerve damage.

- **Urinary Tract Infection**

When you feel a burning or painful sensation when you urinate and notice cloudy and strong-smelling urine in small amounts, you're most likely suffering from a UTI. This condition, which occurs when bacteria invade your urinary tract, may affect your kidneys, bladder, or urethra.

- **Urinary Retention**

If you're unable to empty your bladder completely, you may have a problem with urinary retention. A lot of factors can cause urinary retention, including kidney stones, bladder stones, blockage, urethral stricture, medications, nerve problems, and even cancer.

- **Bladder Stones**

Concentrated urine may create solid masses of minerals in the bladder. It is a condition that is common among men who are at least 30 years old. It generally occurs when you always fail to empty your bladder completely or if you have benign prostatic hyperplasia.

- **Urethral Stricture**

Urethral stricture refers to a scar that prevents urine from flowing freely from your bladder. It may occur when your pelvis and urethra sustain an injury. You'll feel pain in your lower abdomen or pelvis, decreased urine flow, blood in urine, and frequent urination.

- **Dysfunctional Elimination Syndrome**

Dysfunctional elimination syndrome is common among children. It is characterized by the loss of bladder control, along with constipation, and recurring UTI.

This type of urinary problem often appears among children after toilet training while others have it due to an inborn or present anatomical issue. The common symptoms include daytime wetting, bedwetting, constipation, bowel accidents, and infrequent urination.

- **Interstitial Cystitis**

If you're feeling pressure or pain in your bladder and pelvis, you might be dealing with interstitial cystitis. You feel the urge to urinate, but the amount of urine you produce is less than usual. Women are more at risk of having this condition, which may worsen if they have a UTI too. Doctors may use medicines, physical therapy, nerve stimulation methods, and even surgery to treat interstitial cystitis.

- **Neurogenic Bladder**

A problem in the brain, spinal cord, or nerves may cause a loss of bladder control, which could further lead to other urinary concerns. Symptoms vary among affected individuals, but in most cases, the patient can have an underactive or overactive bladder, as well as repeated UTIs.

### **What Are The Common Symptoms Of Urinary Problems?**

If you have urinary problems, you may experience some or all of the following.

- Pain in the abdomen, lower back, or pelvic area
- Bloody, cloudy, or foul-smelling urine
- Fever and chills
- Frequent urination
- Urine leaks
- Loss of bladder control
- Incomplete emptying of the bladder
- Pain or burning sensation when urinating

Consult your doctor right away if you notice at least one of these symptoms along with high fever, nausea, and vomiting.

## **Factors For Urinary Problems**

Several factors may increase your risk of having urinary problems. The most common ones are the following.

- Inborn anatomical problems in the urinary tract
- Suppressed immune system
- Recent urinary procedure
- Diabetes
- Unsafe sexual practices
- Pregnancy
- Family history of urinary problems
- Not drinking enough water
- Systemic diseases
- Surgery of the urinary tract
- Menopause
- Use of diaphragms and spermicidal agents

## **Possible Complications Of Urinary Problems**

Urinary problems can lead to more complicated health issues, such as -

- Permanent kidney damage
- Chronic pain
- Impotence and infertility
- Higher risk of delivering premature infants among women
- Sepsis

## **Common Treatments For Urinary Problems**

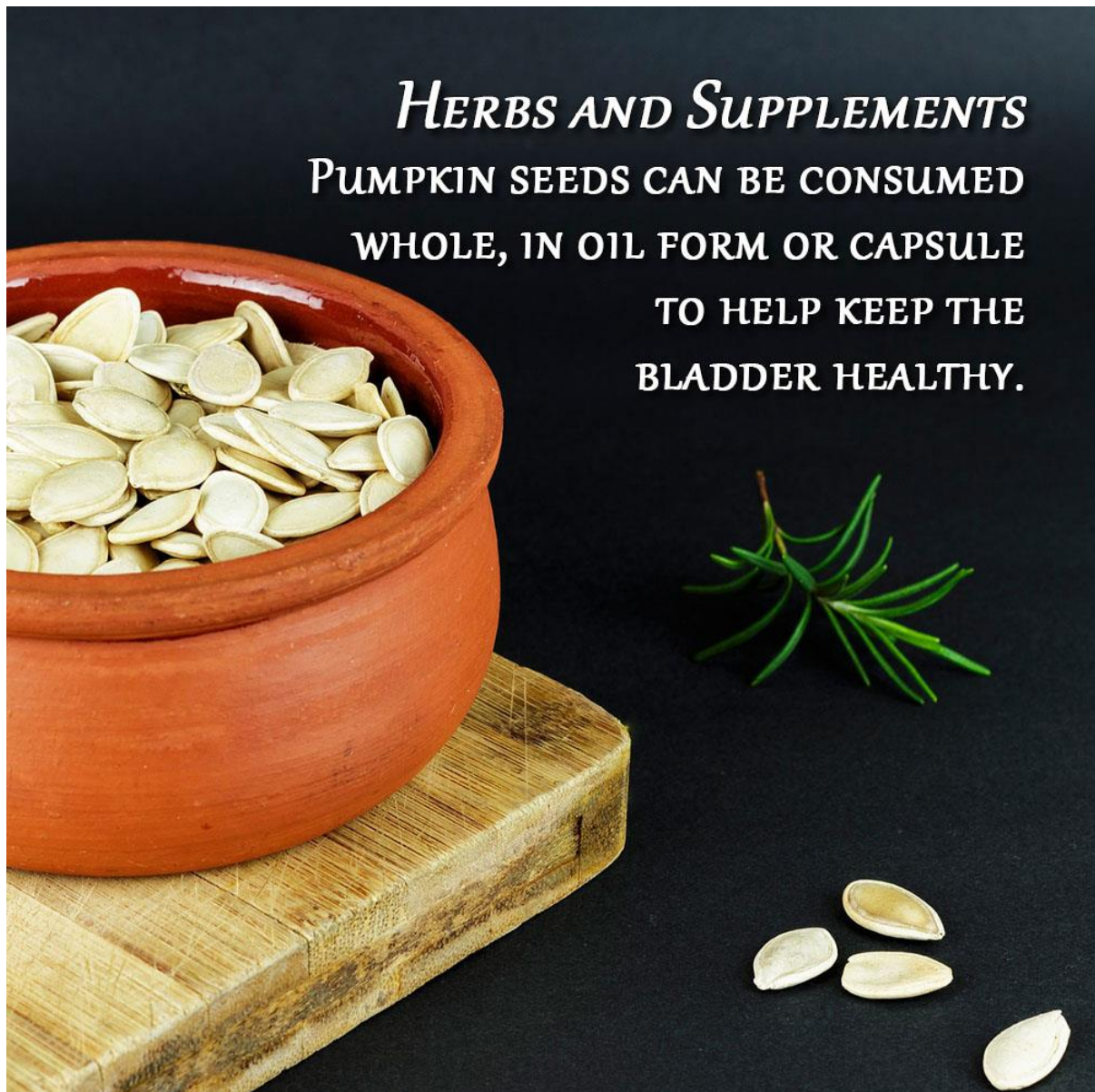
The treatments vary depending on the type of urinary problem. In most cases, your doctor may prescribe medicines to treat the infection, relax the bladder, and minimize the pain. You may be asked to use devices that will support your bladder, undergo physical therapy, or have surgery in serious cases.

Urinary problems can lead to serious health issues if left untreated. Minimize your risk of complications by visiting your doctor immediately when you notice signs of urinary problems. Your health care provider will create a treatment plan for your specific urinary problem.

## Herbs and Supplements for Bladder Health

Aside from conventional medicines, herbs and supplements are available to help keep the bladder healthy.

They're perfect for people who are looking for natural ways to manage bladder problems and avoid the side effects of traditional medications.



There are many herbs and supplements available, so it can be overwhelming to choose one is for you.

Understanding how each works and the benefits they can provide can help you decide which one to try.

- **Bearberry**

Also called Uva Ursi, this is a well-known herbal plant used to treat urinary tract infections. It kills the bacteria in the urinary tract and helps ease inflammation. It can be consumed as a tea, dried leaves, and extract.

- **Horsetail**

This is a type of fern found in rivers and swamps. Horsetail can be used to treat urinary tract problems. It's also considered a diuretic that increases the urine flow in the body. Tea, capsule, and extracts are available for this herbal remedy.

- **Pumpkin Seeds**

Pumpkin seeds are rich in zinc that helps protect against certain cancers like prostate cancer and other bladder issues. Pumpkin seed is a good source of magnesium that lowers the risk of heart disease and regulates blood sugar levels and blood pressure, which are risk factors for bladder and urinary tract problems. As well as whole, they can be consumed in oil form or capsule.

- **Saw Palmetto**

This is a type of palm tree that is found in the eastern part of the US. It helps improve urinary tract function. According to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), it can be used to treat bladder problems, such as overactive bladder and enlarged prostate in men.

- **Corn silk**

This is the shiny fiber that grows on the ear of the corn and is covered by the husk. It has a high diuretic effect and is used to treat a bladder infection. Corn silk contains a variety of nutrients and is rich in antioxidants that promote good metabolism and prevent the formation of kidney stones. You can drink cornsilk tea 2-3 times a day.

- **Cleavers**

This is a kind of climbing weed that can be found in North America and Europe. Cleavers herb can help reduce swollen lymph nodes and treat a bladder infection. It's a diuretic and helps ease pain due to urinary tract infections. In Sweden, cleaver seeds are roasted and used as a substitute for coffee.

- **Buchu**

This is an herbal medicine from South Africa used for treating UTIs and other infections. Buchu has antibacterial properties and reduces inflammation.

- **Bladderwrack**

This is a type of seaweed that grows in some parts of the US and Europe. It contains vitamins and minerals that protect against illnesses and treat infections, such as a UTI. It comes in dried, powdered, and capsule forms.

- **Hachimi-jio-gan**

This Chinese herbal medicine has eight natural ingredients that can help relieve bladder muscle contractions. It helps ease the difficulty in urinating.

- **Stinging Nettle**

Stinging nettle is an herb plant from Europe, Africa, and Asia. It can be used for food and medicine. It's known as a diuretic that helps to treat urinary tract infections, kidney stones, and bladder problems. Stinging nettle leaf can be boiled as herbal tea and cooked for including in some soups.

- **Probiotics**

Probiotics are food supplements that contain live microorganisms to maintain the good bacteria within the body. Research shows that taking probiotics can also support urinary tract health. It helps reduce the risk of urinary tract infection and boosts the immune system.

- **Vitamin D**

Vitamin D is known for keeping the bones healthy, but it also supports bladder health. Research shows that a lack of Vitamin D can decrease the ability to control the pelvic muscles, which contributes to uncontrolled urination.

- **D-mannose**

D-mannose helps treat and prevent urinary tract infections. It can block bacteria, such as E. coli, from entering the urinary tract. Studies have shown that E. coli causes 90% of UTIs. D-mannose comes in capsules and powder form.

The above herbs and supplements are just some of the widely used for keeping the bladder healthy.

However, you need to take certain precautionary measures before you take them. If you're taking medications or have pre-existing health conditions, it's always wise to consult your doctor first.

Even natural herbs and supplements can contradict your medications or cause side effects.

## Conclusion

A urinary condition can be anything from mild bladder incontinence, which can be inconvenient and even distressing, through to advanced kidney disease.

Advanced conditions require extreme treatment. Many people are affected by urinary conditions that are not life-threatening.

The presented symptoms are often a warning that action needs to be taken to ensure that the condition does not develop further, or lead to other more serious problems.

The information given can help you understand why you might be having problems, and also explains holistic ways to prevent and mitigate incidence and severity of symptoms.

*However, bladder and kidney ill-health are not trivial issues.*

If you have concerns, don't hesitate to seek medical advice and treatment sooner rather than later.