

For comfort soak in a warm tub bath. If you have a skin irritation see “Radiation Therapy and Caring for Your Skin” produced by the London Regional Cancer Program.

### Are there medications to help manage cystitis?

If you have an infection, you will be prescribed antibiotics. Your doctor can determine this with a urine sample. You may also get medication to help with bladder pain or discomfort.

### Urine Frequency Diary

If you think you have cystitis, it is important to give your healthcare team as much information as possible. This will help them determine how to treat your cystitis. On the back of this pamphlet is a Urine Frequency Diary. This diary can help you provide the information your healthcare team needs to treat your cystitis

#### Instructions:

- Write down every time you go to the bathroom to urinate – date and time;
- Check (✓) the box that describes the amount of urine you passed;
- Write down any symptoms you feel, like burning, pain, blood, smell, etc.;
- Use your diary when talking with your primary nurse or physician;
- Bring your diary with you to your clinic appointments.

### Urine Frequency Diary

Date/Time	Urge - but no urine	Dribble	Small Amount	Normal Amount	Symptoms “What did you feel, smell, or see?”

Reviewed by the LRCP Patient Education Committee  
December 2006

Reference: Capital Health, Cancer Care Nova Scotia (2004), Cystitis.

# Patient Information Managing Cystitis (Bladder Irritation)



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#### Comments, Feedback?

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## What is cystitis?

The bladder is an organ where urine collects before being passed out of the body. Cystitis (Sis-Tie-Tiss) occurs when the inner lining of the bladder becomes irritated and inflamed. This irritation makes it harder to pass urine and causes discomfort. It can cause serious health problems if it is not treated.

## What causes cystitis?

Cystitis is a common side effect when radiation treatment is given to the pelvis (lower abdomen). It can occur when all or part of the bladder is treated with radiation. Cystitis may start 10 to 15 days into your treatment program. It usually disappears about 3 weeks after your radiation treatment is finished.

## What are some of the symptoms of cystitis?

You may have cystitis if you have the following symptoms:

- Frequent passing of urine or passing small amounts;
- Urinating at night;
- Feeling an urgent need to urinate or the “need to go now”;
- Burning or pain when emptying your bladder;
- Feeling that your bladder is not completely empty;
- Cloudy, dark coloured urine;

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- Small amounts of blood and/or mucus strings in the urine;
  - Foul or strong urine odour.

Some other symptoms include:

- Pain during sexual intercourse;
- Penile pain;
- Lower side and back pain;
- Lower abdominal or pelvic discomfort;
- Fatigue.

## What should I do if I think I have cystitis?

If you think you have cystitis, call the LRCP telephone triage nurse at 519-685-8600, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. This is an automated service. Press option 3 when you are prompted to direct your call to the nurse. The telephone triage nurse will assess your condition and will tell your primary nurse of your complaint. You may also see your family doctor.

**URGENT:**

### When to seek medical attention

Call your family doctor, go to Emergency, or call the LRCP telephone triage nurse if you have any of the following:

- Fever of more than 38°C or 100.5°F;
- Sharp pain in your lower abdomen;
- You cannot urinate for more than 10 hours, while drinking fluids normally;
- Bleeding when urinating.

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## What can I do to help manage cystitis?

Drinking 8 to 10 glasses of fluid a day will help manage cystitis.

### Drinks to choose:

- ✓ Water is the best choice;
- ✓ Cranberry juice;
- ✓ Caffeine-free coffee, tea, carbonated beverages.

### Drinks to avoid:

- ✗ Caffeinated beverages like coffee, tea, hot chocolate, colas;
- ✗ Alcoholic beverages like beer, liquor, wine.

These recommendations can also help you manage cystitis:

- Avoid spicy foods;
- Avoid smoking – nicotine makes cystitis symptoms worse;
- Limit fluid intake after your evening meal;
- Avoid powdered or perfumed personal hygiene products.

For women:

- Use lubrication during sexual intercourse;
  - Urinate after sexual intercourse.
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