

[IMAGE]

More Water = Fewer UTIs

By Editorial Staff

Women are more likely to suffer urinary tract infections (UTIs) than men, primarily because the female urethra is shorter, which makes it easier for bacteria to reach the bladder. Certain types of birth control can also elevate the risk, and risk heightens when a woman reaches menopause. Regardless of the cause, the symptoms of a UTI aren't pleasant, to say the least: a strong and frequent urge to urinate, a burning sensation when urinating and pelvic pain. Depending on whether the infection involves the kidneys, bladder or urethra, other symptoms may manifest as well.

Fortunately, research suggests women can lower their risk of suffering a UTI simply by drinking more water - something most women (and men) should be doing anyway. The study, which involved 140 women with recurrent urinary tract infections who typically drank less than 50 ounces of water a day (about six 8-ounce glasses), found that women who doubled their daily water intake (an additional six 8-ounce glasses) experienced less than two UTIs (average: 1.7) over the next 12 months, compared to more than three UTIs (average: 3.2) for women who only stuck with their usual daily water intake.

Writing in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, a publication of the American Medical Association, the researchers emphasized the significance of their findings: "We demonstrated that increasing daily water intake over a 12-month period resulted in an approximately 50% reduction in frequency of cystitis recurrences and a similar reduction in use of antimicrobial regimens."

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