

Say Good-Bye to UTIs

The top traditional and natural remedies for easing your most intimate aches

by Hannah Wallace

What's worse than the feeling you get from a urinary tract infection? The fact that if you've had one, there's a 20% chance you'll get another. First go-to: Your doctor will likely prescribe an antibiotic. However, bacteria that cause the problem can outsmart these drugs, making them less effective. Consider these natural suggestions to ward off this condition.

1. Herbalist: David Winston, registered herbalist, director of David Winston's Center for Herbal Studies in Washington, NJ

Try uva ursi or pipsissewa "Several studies have shown that uva ursi's active compound has an antibacterial effect on the urinary system. Although pipsissewa is less researched, it has the same active compound and appears to be easier on your stomach."

Herbal Rx: Take 2 to 3 ml of an uva ursi or pipsissewa tincture three times a day until the UTI clears. Either can be found at herb-pharm.com.

2. Acupuncturist: Joan Boccino, licensed acupuncturist, faculty member at Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in New York City

Get pricked "A few acupuncture sessions can reduce the pain and stress of a UTI while building up immunity so you can fight off the infection. A Finnish study found that twice-weekly sessions for 1 month can also help prevent UTIs in susceptible women."

Natural Rx: Find a licensed acupuncturist at nccaom.org, the Web site of the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

3. Infection Specialist: Kalpana Gupta, MD, MPH, assistant professor of medicine at Yale University School of Medicine

Sip cranberry juice "Although it can't treat UTIs, studies show that it can ward them off. Tannins in the juice may prevent bacteria from adhering to the lining of the bladder and urethra. A Canadian study found that a cranberry supplement is also effective."

Nutrition Rx: Drink at least one 8-ounce glass of pure juice or cocktail a day, preferably at bedtime. Or take a cranberry tablet once or twice a day.

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