

As heat continues through fall, shield yourself from UTIs

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As summer gives way to fall, hot weather isn't likely to let up anytime soon, and that means it's important to stay hydrated to keep urinary tract infections at bay.

Getting [dehydrated](#) is a leading risk factor for these common, painful infections, also known as UTIs.

"Patients can experience more UTIs during the [summer](#) due to inadequate fluid intake, especially in the historic heat waves we've been experiencing," said Dr. Maude Carmel, associate professor of urology at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.

[UTIs](#) are common and feature burning or pain with [urination](#), increased frequency and need to go, and blood in the urine.

While painful urination does not necessarily mean you have a UTI, that can be a cause. Diagnosing this requires a urine culture. Urinalysis or a dipstick test are not enough.

Cranberry juice is too diluted to treat UTI, despite the widespread myth that it does. Cranberry supplements can, however, reduce some infection risk, Carmel said in a center news release.

Anyone experiencing UTI symptoms should make an appointment with their primary care physician, she said. A person who has more than three UTIs diagnosed in a year may need to see a urologist. This specialist can order additional testing and evaluate individual risk factors to narrow down the cause.

Carmel offered some tips to reduce the chance of getting a UTI: In addition to drinking at least two liters of fluid (about a half gallon) a day, urinate at least every three hours and also after [intercourse](#). Avoiding constipation can also help.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [urinary tract infections](#).

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