

Avoid Threats To Urinary Tract Health

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(NAPSA)—Scientists have found an important fact about a sensitive topic. The discomfort of a urinary tract infection (UTI) is all too common—for a surprising reason. According to a study in the *Journal Emerging Infectious Diseases*, it can come from consuming chicken or eggs polluted with antibiotic-resistant *E. coli* bacteria.

What To Watch For

The condition affects nearly half of all women at some time in their lives and 12 percent of men. Symptoms can hit suddenly. They include urinary frequency, burning and pain. There can also be cloudiness or blood in the urine. Getting prompt medical attention is critical. If left untreated, the infection can become serious and cause kidney damage.

What To Do

Fortunately, there are five steps you can take to prevent the problem:

- **Go organic.** Until more rigorous laws are enforced on antibiotic use with livestock, choose organic meats and eggs and make sure your meat is thoroughly cooked (chicken should always be cooked to 165 degrees Fahrenheit). Designate a cutting board solely for raw meat and poultry and wash it immediately after use with hot, soapy water. When preparing chicken, be sure to clean your hands thoroughly afterward

- **Drink plenty of water.** The Institute of Medicine recommends about 72 ounces a day. Dehydration increases the risk of bacterial growth.

- **Avoid tight clothing.**

- **Be cautious with OTC drugs.** Antihistamines and certain



Cranberries can boost your ability to avoid an unpleasant infection.

cold medications can cause urinary retention, which increases the risk of a UTI. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about alternatives.

- **Supplement with cranberry.** Cranberries can keep bacteria from adhering to the bladder wall. The active components responsible for this effect are the condensed tannins or proanthocyanidins (a type of flavonoid). A concentrated cranberry ingredient called Cran-Max has been shown in clinical studies to be comparable to traditional antibiotics but without the side effects. The supplement ingredient is unique in that it contains all the vital parts of the cranberry—the fruit, seeds, skin and juice—in a special delivery system called Bio-Shield that protects the active compounds from destruction by stomach acid. It's available in supplements at pharmacies and health food stores.

Where To Learn More

You can find further facts at www.cranmaxinfo.com, www.sherrytorkos.com and www.facebook.com/holistic.sherry or on Twitter at @Sherry_Torkos.

• *Ms. Torkos is a holistic pharmacist and the author of 18 books including "The Canadian Encyclopedia of Natural Medicine."*