

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are a common complication during cancer treatment, especially for those undergoing chemotherapy, radiation, or hormone therapies. This increased risk is due to several factors directly related to cancer therapies:

- **Chemotherapy and immunotherapy** can weaken the immune system by reducing white blood cell counts (neutropenia), making it harder for your body to fight infections like UTIs [145](#).
- **Chemotherapy and some drugs** can also damage the lining of the bladder and urinary tract, or cause inflammation (cystitis), which further increases infection risk [128](#).
- **Radiation therapy to the pelvis** can irritate the bladder and urinary tract, leading to symptoms and a higher risk of infection [2](#).
- **Hormone therapies** that lower estrogen (such as in breast or gynecological cancers) can weaken the urethra and pelvic floor muscles, making it easier for bacteria to cause infection, especially in women [36](#).
- **Surgical treatments** for cancer involving the bladder, prostate, or reproductive organs can also increase UTI risk [2](#).

Symptoms to watch for include:

- Pain or burning during urination
- Frequent or urgent need to urinate
- Cloudy or red urine
- Fever, chills, or fatigue
- Lower abdominal or back pain [2](#)

Why UTIs are more serious during cancer treatment:

- **UTIs can progress quickly** to more serious infections due to weakened immunity.
- **Prompt treatment is critical:** If you suspect a UTI, contact your healthcare team immediately. **Antibiotics are usually prescribed for bacterial infections** [24](#).

Prevention tips:

- Stay well-hydrated.
- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Empty your bladder regularly.
- Avoid irritating products (e.g., perfumed soaps).
- Your care team may have additional recommendations tailored to your treatment and risk factors¹⁵.

If you are experiencing recurring UTIs, discuss this with your oncologist or nurse. They may adjust your treatment, recommend preventive antibiotics, or refer you to a urologist for further evaluation³².

UTIs during cancer treatment are common but can be managed effectively with prompt medical attention and preventive care¹²⁴⁵.

1. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/chemotherapy-and-urinary-tract-infection>
2. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/side-effects/urination-changes>
3. <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/coping/physically/sex-hormone-symptoms/women-coping-with-hormone-symptoms/urinary-problems>
4. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7728278/>
5. <https://medicaltake.com/the-hidden-dangers-understanding-urinary-tract-infections-in-chemotherapy-patients/>
6. <https://www.unitedurology.com/chesapeake-urology/blogs-news/2017/december/the-urologic-side-effects-of-breast-cancer-treat/>
7. <https://bcac.org/urinary-tract-infections-after-bladder-cancer/>
8. <https://cancer.ca/en/treatments/side-effects/bladder-problems>