

## **How to Deal with Annoying UTI's**

UTIs are 50 times more common in women than men and it is estimated that 20% of women are affected by UTIs at some time during their lives - many of these women will also experience recurrent episodes of UTI throughout their lifetime. As the urinary tract is usually sterile, UTI's occur when bacteria are introduced. Most commonly it is E.coli (70-90%) and less commonly Staphylococcus (5-10%).

### **Underlying issues that can help cause urinary tract infections:**

- Changes in estrogen levels as seen in menopause, pregnancy & pre period alter the delicate balance between good & bad bacteria in the vaginal tract
- Dehydration
- Antibiotics, oral contraceptive pill & spermicides all alter vaginal flora
- Stress has the effect of suppressing the immune system allowing E.coli to proliferate
- Caffeine, alcohol, sugar also suppress the immune system and can increase risk of UTI's
- Pelvic floor dysfunction
- Sex – nuns have 10% incidence of UTI's compared to the average woman!

### **What do you recommend to prevent UTIs?**

- drink at least 8 glasses of filtered water very day
- always wipe from front to back as E.Coli live in the colon and are introduced into the vagina when wiping from back to front
- avoid tight fitting underwear and clothes
- wear cotton lingerie and stockings rather than pantyhose
- avoid the use of feminine hygiene sprays and powders
- urinate after sexual intercourse
- women with recurrent infections should avoid the use of possibly irritant contraceptive devices such as diaphragms with spermicides. Make sure to use organic tampons
- avoid sugar, alcohol, caffeine, and animal fats as these have been to show to suppress the immune system.
- eliminate food sensitivities in the diet as they may contribute to pH changes that weaken the immune system
- Shower after swimming in a chlorinated pool
- always use organic, chemical free laundry detergents and soaps

### **What can you do when you have a UTI?**

- Probiotics are a must as they normalise the bacterial balance in the vagina
- Increase garlic and onions as they are natural antibiotics
- Echinacea increases white blood cell activity
- Drink lots of herbal tea such as dandelion leaf and vegetable (not fruit!) juices



- Vitamin C in doses of 1 gram 3 times a day
- Herbs:
  - Bearberry is a urinary antiseptic
  - Couch grass soothes irritated membranes
  - Calendula is anti inflammatory