

# 10 Top Tips

## Worried about bladder cancer? Helping you talk to your GP.

**1** The most common symptom of bladder cancer is blood in your urine (even just once):

- It's usually bright red, but sometimes rusty or dark brown. You may also see blood clots.
- If there's only a small amount of blood in your urine, it may not be obvious, but there are urine tests which your GP can use to check.

Other symptoms include:

- Pain or discomfort during or after passing urine
- And/or feeling the need to pass urine more often or more urgently.

These symptoms might look like those of a urine infection, but tests by your GP may not actually find any infection. This needs further testing.

**2** See your GP at the first sign of blood in your urine. Even if it happens once or goes away for a while – don't wait.

**3** Symptoms in women can be trickier to notice. Your period can mask blood in your urine so your doctor may ask for a sample when you are not having a period. If you are no longer having periods, you should always tell your doctor about any bleeding you notice.

**4** If your GP diagnoses a urinary infection after you have seen blood in your urine, ask if the urine test confirmed an infection or whether you need further tests to rule out bladder cancer.

**5** If you see blood in your urine, and your GP does NOT refer you for further tests, ask them to explain why. It's OK to ask for a second opinion. If you are referred, especially if you're over 45, ask your GP about fast track referral. Although bladder cancer is less common in people under 45, you must still act.

**6** If you have urinary tract infections that keep coming back, are hard to get rid of and last a long time this may be a sign of bladder cancer. Ask your GP if you need further tests.

**7** If you're worried about bladder cancer or your symptoms, and you can't get an early appointment, stress your concerns to your surgery. If it makes you more comfortable, ask to see a male or female GP.

**8** If friends or family notice you aren't well, or are concerned about your health or symptoms, listen to their concerns and see your GP. You can always bring someone along to your appointment for support.

**9** Write down your symptoms and concerns before your appointment. If you have a family history of bladder or kidney cancer, tell your GP. Let your GP know if the following risk factors apply: smoking (or second hand smoke), chemical exposure (e.g. working environment) or previous radiotherapy treatment.

**10** If your symptoms don't improve within 3 weeks or if you're still worried go back to your GP. Do this even if your tests were negative or you see no further blood in your urine.

These tips were created by ABC UK and bladder cancer patients, with input from:

- Mr Roger Kockelbergh, Macmillan Consultant Advisor, ABC UK Trustee;
- Dr Jackie Dominey, Macmillan GP;
- Dr Bridget Gwynne, Macmillan GP;
- Dr Jon Rees, GP & ABC UK Trustee

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