

UTI in men – rarer but more resistant...

The gender differences in getting treatment for urinary infections are more than just whether you approach a gynecologist or physician, a recent study on about 12,000 samples tested at a leading diagnostic lab in Mumbai suggests.

Overall, women are far more likely to have urinary infections, constituting 71% of the overall cases that were analyzed. Men constituted 29% of the cases and showed a fairly different organism profile vs. women. E.coli, the most common organism of urinary infection, is found to have far more prevalence in women than men. In men, only 56% of all urinary infections are E.coli, as compared to 70% in women.

Men are less likely to develop urinary infections, but show much higher resistance to antibiotics vs. women - among E.coli infections in men, 66% are ESBL producing i.e. resistant to standard antibiotics - penicillin, amoxicillin and ampicillin, as compared to 53% in women. Klebsiella, an organism known for its capability to fast develop resistance, constituted 14% of infections in men, and 67% of them were already ESBL producing. Men are also much more likely to harbour a Pseudomonas infection as compared to women (12% vs. 4%). Pseudomonas is an organism known for being inherent resistance to survive drugs, so much so that it can grow in Dettol.

The study found that these differences were valid across most classes of antibiotics - penicillins, beta-lactam inhibitors, cephalosporins, aminoglycosides, fluoroquinolones, carbapenems, nalidixic acid. Men are significantly more likely to be resistant to these antibiotics ($p < 0.01$). This makes it very important that the UTI diagnosis is supported by culture and sensitivity testing to determine the most appropriate antibiotic.

