

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT URINARY TRACT INFECTION

What is a urinary tract infection (UTI)?

- A UTI is a common infection of the urinary system (i.e., urethra, bladder, ureters, and kidneys).
- It occurs when bacteria at the opening of the urethra ascend to the bladder.
- Infection limited to the urethra is called urethritis.
- Infection that moves from the urethra to the bladder is called cystitis.
- Infection that moves further up the urinary tract to the kidneys is called pyelonephritis.

What factors increase the risk for UTI?

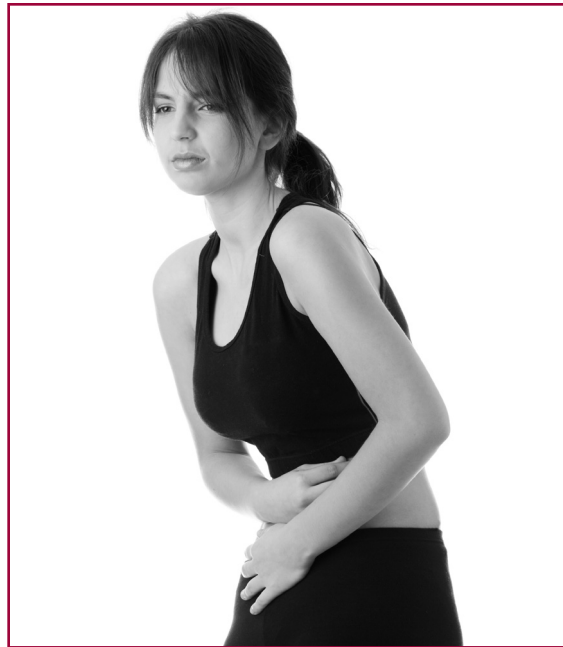
- Being a sexually active adult woman.
- Using a diaphragm or spermicide.
- Having an abnormality of the urinary tract that obstructs the flow of urine (such as a kidney stone or enlarged prostate gland).
- Having a catheter (a tube inserted in the urethra and bladder of people who cannot pass urine or who lack bladder control).
- Having poorly controlled diabetes in postmenopause.

What are common symptoms?

- Painful urination and feeling an urgent need to urinate frequently.
- Urine that contains blood or looks cloudy.
- Discomfort in the lower abdomen and pain in the back or pelvic area.
- Fever may develop.

How is it diagnosed?

- Your doctor may diagnose UTI based on your symptoms or may do additional tests.
- Your urine is checked for evidence of infection with a test called a urinalysis or dipstick.
- A urine culture for bacteria if you are pregnant or are likely to have a kidney infection or resistant bacteria.



- If you have recurrent or resistant infection, your doctor may order tests to determine if your urinary system is normal.

How is it treated?

- Your doctor will prescribe an oral antibacterial drug.
- It is important to take the full course of treatment even if your symptoms disappear.
- Patients with severe kidney infections may need to be hospitalized and receive IV treatments.
- If you have recurring infection, you may be advised to take low doses of an antibiotic daily for many months or to take a single dose of an antibiotic after sexual intercourse to prevent infection.

For More Information

www.urologyhealth.org/urology/index.cfm?article=47
Information on urinary tract infections in adults from the American Urological Association.

<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/women/gen-health/284.html>
Answers to questions about painful urination, from the American Academy of Family Physicians.

<http://womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/urinary-tract-infection.cfm>

Urinary tract infection fact sheet from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health.

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