

# Urinary Tract Infections

## Key Points:

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is caused by bacteria that gets inside of your urinary tract. This includes your kidneys, ureters, bladder, and urethra. These can be painful and annoying. A UTI should be treated early to prevent infection from spreading to the kidneys.

## What causes a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI):

Some of the common causes of a UTI are having a urinary catheter, being incontinent (unable to control when you urinate), urinary tract problems such as kidney stones, not being circumcised, past UTI or urinary tract surgery, sexual intercourse, obesity, pregnancy, and menopause

## Common Signs and Symptoms of a UTI:

- Strong persistent urge to urinate
- Pain or burning sensation during or after urination
- Passing frequent small amounts of urine
- Blood in the urine
- Cloudy urine with a foul odour
- Fever/Chills
- Back pain, or pain in your side
- Nausea or vomiting

## Diagnosis and Treatment

Your healthcare provider will ask about your signs and symptoms and may press on your lower abdomen or back to see if you have pain. They may request a urine sample to test for bacteria, and an ultrasound may be done to see if there are any abnormalities that could be contributing to the issue.

If the infection is only in the bladder, you will probably only need antibiotics for 3-7 days. If the infection is in the kidney, you may have to take antibiotics for up to 2 weeks. It is important to take the medication as prescribed **until it is finished**, even if your symptoms go away.

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These instructions are not intended to be all-inclusive and may not cover all possibilities. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your doctor, Telehealth Ontario (866)797-0000, or return to the Emergency Department.

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## Return to Emergency Department or call 911 immediately if:

- You are urinating very little, or not at all
- You have a high fever with shaking chills
- You have increasing severe side or back pain

## See your primary care provider or return to Emergency Department if:

- You do not feel better after 2-3 days
- You have new symptoms such as blood in your urine
- You are vomiting

### WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO PREVENT UTIs?

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Empty your bladder often
- Wipe from front to back after urinating or after a bowel movement
- Wear loose fitting cotton underwear
- Urinate before and after sexual intercourse



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