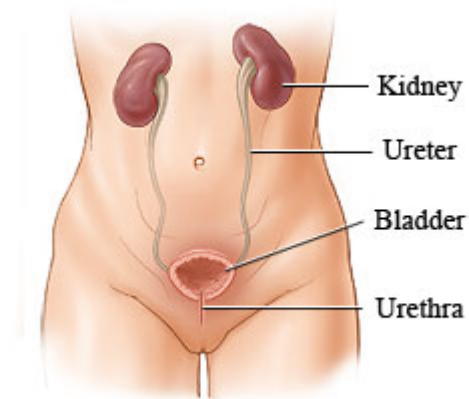


Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) in Women: Care Instructions



© Healthwise, Incorporated

Overview

A urinary tract infection, or UTI, is a general term for an infection anywhere between the kidneys and the urethra (where urine comes out). Most UTIs are bladder infections. They often cause pain or burning when you urinate.

UTIs are caused by bacteria and can be cured with antibiotics. Be sure to complete your treatment so that the infection does not get worse.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Take your antibiotics as directed. Do not stop taking them just because you feel better. You need to take the full course of antibiotics.
- Drink extra water and other fluids for the next day or two. This will help make the urine less concentrated and help wash out the bacteria that are causing the infection. (If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.)
- Avoid drinks that are carbonated or have caffeine. They can irritate the bladder.
- Urinate often. Try to empty your bladder each time.
- To relieve pain, take a hot bath or lay a heating pad set on low over your lower belly or genital area. Never go to sleep with a heating pad in place.

To prevent UTIs

- Drink plenty of water each day. This helps you urinate often, which clears bacteria from your system. (If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.)
- Urinate when you need to.
- If you are sexually active, urinate right after you have sex.
- Change sanitary pads often.
- Avoid douches, bubble baths, feminine hygiene sprays, and other feminine hygiene products that have deodorants.
- After going to the bathroom, wipe from front to back.

When should you call for help?



Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Symptoms such as fever, chills, nausea, or vomiting get worse or appear for the first time.
- You have new pain in your back just below your rib cage. This is called flank pain.
- There is new blood or pus in your urine.
- You have any problems with your antibiotic medicine.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You are not getting better after taking an antibiotic for 2 days.
- Your symptoms go away but then come back.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/PatientEd>

Enter **K848** in the search box to learn more about "**Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) in Women: Care Instructions**".

©2006-2022 Healthwise, Incorporated.

This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.