



Urinary Tract Infection (UTI, Cystitis, Pyelonephritis)

Patient and Family Education

What is a urinary tract infection?

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection of the bladder or kidneys.

- An infection of the bladder is called cystitis.
- A kidney infection is called pyelonephritis.

Most often the germ causing the UTI is one of the germs found on the skin or around the rectum. A child with urinary tract problems may have more of a chance of having a UTI.

What are the possible symptoms?

Your child may have one or more of these symptoms:

- Pain when urinating (passing water)
- Urinating often in small amounts
- Back or stomach pain
- Blood in the urine
- Fever, vomiting, diarrhea or fussiness
- Bad smelling urine

What tests could my child have?

Your child may have one or more of these tests:

- A urine test (urinalysis)
- A urine culture to check for germs
- Special X-rays may be done to find out if your child is likely to have more UTIs.

These tests may also need to be done at the end of the antibiotic treatment to make sure the infection is gone.

What is the treatment?

Your child's doctor will talk with you about specific care for your child. Some general guidelines to follow include:

- Give all medicines, which may include an antibiotic, as advised by your child's doctor.
- Give acetaminophen (Tylenol[®] or other less costly store brand) or ibuprofen (Motrin[®], Advil[®] or other less costly store brand) if prescribed by your child's doctor to control fever. Follow the directions on the box carefully or ask your child's doctor how much medicine to give.
 - Do not give your child more than 5 doses of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period.
 - Do not give acetaminophen to babies less than 3 months of age without talking with your child's doctor.
 - Do not give ibuprofen to babies less than 6 months old without a doctor's order
- Offer plenty of fluids so your child has a good urine output.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404-250-KIDS.

Urinary Tract Infection, continued

- A warm tub bath may help make your child more comfortable.
- Do not use bubble bath. It may cause or increase pain with urination.

When should I call the doctor?

Call your child's doctor if your child:

- Has signs of dehydration (drying out):
 - No urine in six to eight hours in an infant younger than 1 year old
 - No urine in more than eight hours in a child older than 1 year old
 - No tears when crying
 - Sunken eyes
 - Dry lips and mouth
- Vomits often
- Has unexplained swelling of the eyes or other parts of the body
- Has a fever that lasts more than 24 hours after taking an antibiotic

Instructions for collecting a midstream, clean-catch urine specimen at home

Your child's doctor may give you a container to collect urine in. Follow the directions carefully. Some helpful guidelines include:

- Wash the genital area several times with cotton balls and warm water. The genital area is your child's "private" parts.
 - **For girls**—Sit on the toilet seat with legs spread wide so that the labia (skin folds of the vagina) don't touch.
 - **For boys and girls**—Start to urinate. Then place the clean container directly in line with the stream of urine.
- Remove it after you have collected a few ounces, but before your child stops urinating. The first or last drops that come out of the bladder may contain germs.
- Keep the urine in the refrigerator until you take it to the doctor's office later that day. Put the jar in a plastic bag with some ice to keep it cold on the way to the office.

How can I help prevent urinary tract infections?

- Teach your child how to wipe and clean himself when going to the bathroom
- Teach girls to wipe from front to back
- Teach your child to clean the skin and area around private parts gently but well when bathing
- See your doctor if your child has problems with constipation. It can increase the risk of getting a UTI by partially blocking the flow of urine out of the bladder.

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