

## Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs)

### What Is a Urinary Tract Infection?

A urinary tract infection, or UTI, is an infection in any part of your urinary system, which includes your kidneys, bladder, ureters, and urethra.

Women have a higher risk of UTIs than men.

### Symptoms of UTIs

- A burning feeling when you pee
- A frequent or intense urge to pee, even though little comes out when you do
- Cloudy, dark, bloody, or strange-smelling pee
- Feeling tired or shaky
- Fever or chills (a sign that the infection may have reached your kidneys)
- Pain or pressure in your back or lower abdominal

### Types of UTIs

An infection can happen in different parts of your urinary tract. Each type has a different name, based on where it is.

- **Cystitis**(bladder): You might feel like you need to pee a lot, or it might hurt when you pee. You might also have lower belly pain and cloudy or bloody urine.
- **Pyelonephritis**(kidneys): This can cause fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, and pain in your upper back or side.
- **Urethritis**(urethra): This can cause a discharge and burning when you pee.

### Causes of UTIs



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- Poor wiping technique-failure to wipe from front to back after using the bathroom.
- Anatomical features: women have a shorter urethra than men hence an increased risk of infection.
- Unsafe sexual activities
- Immunosuppressive disease e.g. diabetes may predispose one to recurrent infection
- Hormonal changes
- Multiple sclerosis
- Kidney stones
- Spinal cord injuries

### UTI Tests and Diagnosis

- Urinalysis
- Culture and sensitivity
- Other tests: Ultrasound, CT Scan, MRI, and Cystoscopy

### Treatment of UTIs

If you have signs and symptoms of a UTI it is advisable to visit a qualified health care provider and avoid self-treatment.

- Use of antibiotics –Ensure that you take all prescribed medicine even after you start feeling better.
- Drink a lot of water to flush the bacteria out.
- Painkillers to soothe the pain
- Cranberry juice is often promoted to prevent or treat UTIs.

### How to Prevent UTI Re-Infection

Below are some tips that can help you avoid getting another UTI:

- Empty your bladder often as soon as you feel the need to pee; don't rush - be sure you've emptied your bladder completely.
- Wipe from front to back after you use the toilet.
- Drink lots of water.





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- Choose showers over baths.
- Stay away from feminine hygiene sprays, scented douches, and scented bath products; they'll only increase irritation.
- Cleanse your genital area before sex.
- Pee after sex to flush out any bacteria that may have entered your urethra.
- If you use a diaphragm, unlubricated condoms, or spermicidal jelly for birth control, you may want to switch to another method. Diaphragms can increase bacteria growth, while unlubricated condoms and spermicides can irritate your urinary tract. All can make UTI symptoms more likely.
- Keep your genital area dry by wearing cotton underwear and loose-fitting clothes. Don't wear tight jeans and nylon underwear; they can trap moisture, creating the perfect environment for bacteria growth.

